



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

University of Wisconsin

LIBRARY

Class

BS

Book

.059

Presented by

D.H. Tenney.

THE
BIBLE OF NATURE;
OR, THE
PRINCIPLES OF SECULARISM.

A Contribution to the Religion of the Future.

BY
FELIX L. OSWALD.

"Light is help from Heaven."—G. E. LESSING.

NEW YORK :
THE TRUTH SEEKER COMPANY,
28 LAFAYETTE PLACE.

Copyrighted,
By FELIX L. OSWALD,
1888.

43619

1 D '97

BS

OS9

TO

THE MEMORY OF

BENEDIOT SPINOZA,

THIS WORK IS REVERENTLY DEDICATED

BY THE AUTHOR.

•

CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
INTRODUCTION, - - - - -	9

PHYSICAL MAXIMS.

CHAP.		
I. HEALTH, - - - - -	18	
II. STRENGTH, - - - - -	33	
III. CHASTITY, - - - - -	45	
IV. TEMPERANCE, - - - - -	56	
V. SKILL, - - - - -	73	

MENTAL MAXIMS.

VI. KNOWLEDGE, - - - - -	85
VII. INDEPENDENCE, - - - - -	95
VIII. PRUDENCE, - - - - -	106
IX. PERSEVERANCE, - - - - -	116
X. FREETHOUGHT, - - - - -	124

MORAL MAXIMS.

XI. JUSTICE, - - - - -	137
XII. TRUTH, - - - - -	148
XIII. HUMANITY, - - - - -	160
XIV. FRIENDSHIP, - - - - -	172
XV. EDUCATION, - - - - -	182

CONTENTS.

OBJECTIVE MAXIMS.

XVI. FOREST CULTURE, - - - -	194
XVII. RECREATION, - - - -	208
XVIII. DOMESTIC REFORM, - - - -	212
XIX. LEGISLATIVE REFORM, - - - -	221
XX. THE PRIESTHOOD OF SECULARISM, - - - -	231

THE BIBLE OF NATURE ; OR, THE PRINCIPLES OF SECULARISM.

INTRODUCTION.

From the dawn of authentic history to the second century of our chronological era the nations of antiquity were beguiled by the fancies of supernatural religions. For fifteen hundred years the noblest nations of the Middle Ages were tortured by the insanities of an antinatural religion. The time has come to found a Religion of Nature.

The principles of that religion are revealed in the monitions of our normal instincts, and have never been wholly effaced from the soul of man, but for long ages the consciousness of their purpose has been obscured by the mists of superstition and the systematic inculcation of baneful delusions. The first taste of alcohol revolts our normal instincts ; nature protests against the incipience of a ruinous poison-vice ; but the fables of the Bacchus priests for centuries encouraged that vice and deified the genius of intemperance. Vice itself blushed to mention the immoralities of the pagan gods whose temples invited the worship of the heavenly-minded. Altars were erected to a goddess of lust, to a god of wantonness, to a god of thieves.

That dynasty of scamp-gods was, at last, forced to abdicate, but only to yield their throne to a celestial Phalaris, a torture-god who cruelly punished the gratification of the most natural instincts, and foredoomed a vast plurality of his children to an eternity of horrid and hopeless torments. Every natural enjoyment was denounced as sinful. Every natural blessing was vilified as a curse in disguise. Mirth is the sunshine of the human mind, the loveliest impulse of life's truest children; yet the apostle of Antinaturalism promised his heaven to the gloomy world-despiser. "Blessed are they that mourn." "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily." "Be afflicted, and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to heaviness." "Woe unto you that laugh." "If any man come to me and hate not his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."

The love of health is as natural as the dread of pain and decrepitude. The religion of Antinaturalism revoked the health laws of the Mosaic code, and denounced the care even for the preservation of life itself. "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on." "Bodily exercise profiteth but little." "There is nothing from without a man that, entering him, can defile him."

The love of knowledge awakens with the dawn of reason; a normal child is naturally inquisitive; the wonders of the visible creation invite the study of

every intelligent observer. The enemies of nature suppressed the manifestations of that instinct, and hoped to enter their paradise by the crawling trail of blind faith. "Blessed are they that do not see and yet believe." "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." "He that believeth not is condemned already."

The love of freedom, the most universal of the protective instincts, was suppressed by the constant inculcation of passive resignation to the yoke of "the powers that be," of abject submission to oppression and injustice. "Resist not evil." "Of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again." "Who-soever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain." "Submit yourselves to the powers that be."

The love of industry, the basis of social welfare, that manifests itself even in social insects, was denounced as unworthy of a true believer: "Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? what shall we drink? or wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the gentiles seek." "Take no thought of the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself." "Ask and it shall be given you," i.e., stop working and rely on miracles and prayer.

The hope for the peace of the grave, the last solace of the wretched and weary, was undermined by the dogmas of eternal hell, and the preordained damnation of all earth-loving children of nature: "He that hateth not his own life cannot be my disciple." "The children of the kingdom shall be cast out into

utter darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." "They shall be cast into a furnace of fire, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." "They shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb." "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth forever and ever, and they have no rest day nor night."

For fifteen centuries the pilot of the church lured our forefathers to a whirlpool of mental and physical degeneration, till the storms of the Protestant revolt enabled them to break the spell of the fatal eddies, and, like a swimmer saving his naked life, mankind has struggled back to the rescuing rocks of our mother earth. Lured by the twinkle of reflected stars, we have plunged into the maelstrom of Antinaturalism, and after regaining the shore, by utmost efforts, it seems now time to estimate the expenses of the adventure.

The suppression of science has retarded the progress of mankind by a full thousand years. For a century or two the Mediterranean peninsulas still lingered in the evening twilight of pagan civilization, but with the confirmed rule of the church the gloom of utter darkness overspread the homes of her slaves, and the delusions of that dreadful night far exceeded the worst superstitions of pagan barbarism. "The cloud of universal ignorance," says Hallam, "was broken only by a few glimmering lights, who owe almost the whole of their distinction to the surrounding darkness. We cannot conceive of any state of society more adverse to the intellectual improvement

of mankind than one which admitted no middle line between dissoluteness and fanatical mortifications. No original writer of any merit arose, and learning may be said to have languished in a region of twilight for the greater part of a thousand years. In 992 it was asserted that scarcely a single person was to be found, in Rome itself, who knew the first elements of letters. Not one priest of a thousand in Spain, about the age of Charlemagne, could address a common letter of salutation to another." In that midnight hour of unnatural superstitions every torch-bearer was persecuted as an enemy of the human race. Bruno, Campanella, Kepler, Vanini, Galilei, Copernicus, Descartes, and Spinoza had to force their way through a snapping and howling pack of monkish fanatics who beset the path of every reformer, and overcame the heroism of all but the stoutest champions of light and freedom. From the tenth to the end of the sixteenth century not less than 3,000,000 "heretics," *i.e.*, scholars and free inquirers, had to expiate their love of truth in the flames of the stake.

The systematic suppression of freedom, in the very instincts of the human mind, turned Christian Europe into a universal slave-pen of bondage and tyranny; there were only captives and jailors, abject serfs and their inhuman masters. Freedom found a refuge only in the fastnesses of the mountains; in the wars against the pagan Saxons the last freemen of the plains were slain like wild beasts; a thousand of their brave leaders were beheaded on the market square of Quedlinburg, thousands were imprisoned in Christian convents, or dragged away to the bond-

age of feudal and ecclesiastic slave farms where they learned to envy the peace of the dead and the freedom of the lowest savages. "One sees certain dark, livid, naked, sunburnt, wild animals, male and female, scattered over the country and attached to the soil, which they root and turn over with indomitable perseverance. They have, as it were, an articulate voice; and when they rise to their feet they show a human face. They are, in fact, men; they creep at night into dens, where they live on black bread, water, and roots. They spare other men the labor of plowing, sowing, and harvesting, and, therefore, deserve some small share of the bread they have grown. Yet they were the fortunate peasants—those who had bread and work—and they were then the few" (while half the arable territory of France was in the hands of the church). "Feudalism," says Blanqui, "was a concentration of all scourges. The peasant, stripped of the inheritance of his fathers, became the property of ignorant, inexorable, indolent masters. He was obliged to travel fifty leagues with their carts whenever they required it; he labored for them three days in the week, and surrendered to them half the product of his earnings during the other three; without their consent, he could not change his residence or marry. And why, indeed, should he wish to marry, if he could scarcely save enough to maintain himself? The Abbot Alcuin had twenty thousand slaves called *serfs*, who were forever attached to the soil. This is the great cause of the rapid depopulation observed in the Middle Ages, and of the prodigious multitude of convents which sprang up on

every side. It was doubtless a relief to such miserable men to find in the cloisters a retreat from oppression; but the human race never suffered a more cruel outrage, industry never received a wound better calculated to plunge the world again into the darkness of the rudest antiquity. It suffices to say that the prediction of the approaching end of the world, industriously spread by the rapacious monks at this time, was received without terror."

The joy-hating insanities of the unnatural creed blighted the lives of thousands, and trampled the flowers of earth even on the bleak soil of North Britain, where the children of nature need every hour of respite from cheerless toil. "All social pleasures," says Buckle, "all amusements and all the joyful instincts of the human heart, were denounced as sinful. The clergy looked on all comforts as sinful in themselves, merely because they were comforts. The great object of life was to be in a state of constant affliction. Whatever pleased the senses was to be suspected. It mattered not what a man liked; the mere fact of his liking it made it sinful. Whatever was natural was wrong."

The dogma of exclusive salvation by faith made forcible conversion appear an act of mercy, and stimulated those wars of aggression that have cost the lives of more than thirty millions of our fellow-men. In the Crusades alone five millions of victims were sacrificed on the altar of fanaticism; the extermination of the Moriscos reduced the population of Spain by seven millions; the man-hunts of the Spanish-American priests almost annihilated the native population

of the West Indies and vast areas of Central and South America, once as well-settled as the most fertile regions of Southern Europe. The horrid butcheries in the land of the Albigenses, in the mountain homes of the Vaudois, and in the Spanish provinces of the Netherlands exterminated the inhabitants of whole cities and districts, and drenched the fields of earth with the blood of her noblest children.

The neglect of industry and the depreciation of secular pursuits proved the death-blow of rational agriculture. The garden-lands of the Old World became sand-wastes, the soil of the neglected fields was scorched by summer suns and torn by winter floods till three million square miles of once fruitful lands were turned into hopeless deserts. "The fairest and fruitfulest provinces of the Roman empire," says Professor Marsh—"precisely that portion of terrestrial surface, in short, which about the commencement of the Christian era was endowed with the greatest superiority of soil, climate, and position, which had been carried to the highest pitch of physical improvement—is now completely exhausted of its fertility. A territory larger than all Europe, the abundance of which sustained in bygone centuries a population *scarcely inferior to that of the whole Christian world at the present day*, has been entirely withdrawn from human use, or, at best, is thinly inhabited. . . . There are regions, where the operation of causes, set in action by man, has brought the face of the earth to a state of desolation almost as complete as that of the moon; and though within

that brief space of time which we call the historical period, they are known to have been covered with luxuriant woods, verdant pastures, and fertile meadows, they are now too far deteriorated to be reclaimable by man, nor can they become again fitted for his use except through great geological changes or other agencies, over which we have no control. . . . Another era of equal improvidence would reduce this earth to such a condition of impoverished productiveness as to threaten the depravation, barbarism, and, perhaps, even the extinction of the human species" (Man and Nature, pp. 4, 43).

The experience of the Middle Ages has, indeed, been bought at a price which the world cannot afford to pay a second time. The sacrifices of fifteen centuries have failed to purchase the millennium of the Galilean Messiah, and the time has come to seek salvation by a different road.

The Religion of the Future will preach the Gospel of Redemption by reason, by science, and by conformity to the laws of our health-protecting instincts. Its teachings will reconcile instinct and precept, and make Nature the ally of education. Its mission will seek to achieve its triumphs, not by the suppression, but by the encouragement of free inquiry; it will dispense with the aid of pious frauds; its success will be a victory of truth, of freedom, and humanity; it will reconquer our earthly paradise, and teach us to renounce the Eden that has to be reached through the gates of death.

I.—PHYSICAL MAXIMS.

CHAPTER I

HEALTH.

A.—LESSONS OF INSTINCT.

Nature has guarded the health of her creatures by a marvelous system of protective intuitions. The sensitive membrane of the eye resents the intrusion of every foreign substance. An intuitive sense of discomfort announces every injurious extreme of temperature. To the unperturbed taste of animals in a state of nature wholesome food is pleasant, injurious substances repulsive or insipid. Captain Kane found that only the rage of famine will tempt the foxes of the Arctic coastlands to touch spoiled meat. In times of scarcity the baboons of the Abyssinian mountains greedily hunt for edible roots, which an unerring faculty enables them to distinguish from the poisonous varieties. The naturalist Tschudi mentions a troop of half-tamed chamois forcing their way through a shingle roof, rather than pass a night in the stifling atmosphere of a goat stable.

Man in his primitive state had his full share of those protective instincts, which still manifest themselves in children and Nature-guided savages. It is a mistake to suppose that the lowest of those savages

are naturally fond of ardent spirits. The travelers Park, Gerstaecker, Vambery, Kohl, De Tocqueville, and Brehm agree that the first step on the road to ruin is always taken in deference to the example of the admired superior race, if not in compliance with direct persuasion. The negroes of the Senegal highlands shuddered at the first taste of alcohol, but from a wish to conciliate the good will of their visitors hesitated to decline their invitations, which subsequently, indeed, became rather superfluous. The children of the wilderness unhesitatingly prefer the hardships of a winter camp to the atmospheric poisons of our tenement houses. Shaml Ben Haddin, the Circassian war chief, whose iron constitution had endured the vicissitudes of thirty-four campaigns, pathetically protested against the pest air of his Russian prison cell, and warned his jailers that, unless his dormitory was changed, Heaven would hold them responsible for the guilt of his suicide. I have known country boys to step out into a shower of rain and sleet to escape from the contaminated atmosphere of a city workshop, and after a week's work in a spinning mill return to the penury of their mountain homes, rather than purchase dainties at the expense of their lungs.

The word *frugality*, in its original sense, referred literally to a diet of tree-fruits, in distinction to carnivorous fare, and nine out of ten children still decidedly prefer ripe fruit and farinaceous dishes to the richest meats. They as certainly prefer easy, home-made clothes to the constraint of fashionable fripperies. The main tenets of our dress-reformers are

anticipated in the sensible garments of many half-civilized nations. Boys, within reach of a free bathing river, can dispense with the advice of the hydro-pathic school. They delight in exercise; they laugh at the imaginary danger of fresh-air draughts, and the perils of barefoot rambles in wet and dry. They would cast their vote in favor of the outdoor pursuit of hundreds of occupations which custom, rather than necessity, now associates with the disadvantages of indoor confinement. The hygienic influence of arboreal vegetation has been recognized by the ablest pathologists of modern times; avenues of shade trees have been found to redeem the sanitary condition of many a grimy city, and the eminent hygienist, Schrodtt, holds that, as a remedial institution, a shady park is worth a dozen drug stores. But all these lessons only confirm an often manifested, and too often suppressed, instinct of our young children: their passionate love of woodland sports, their love of tree shade, of greenwood camps, of forest life in all its forms. Those who hold that "nature" is but a synonym of "habit" should witness the rapture of city children at first sight of forest glades and shady meadow brooks, and compare it with the city-dread of the Swiss peasant lad or the American backwoods boy, sickened by the fumes and the uproar of a large manufacturing town. A thousands years of vice and abnormal habits have not yet silenced the voice of the physical conscience that recalls our steps to the path of Nature, and will not permit us to transgress her laws unwarned.

B.—REWARDS OF CONFORMITY.

The reward of nature-abiding habits is not confined to the negative advantage of escaping the discomforts of disease. In the pursuit of countless competitive avocations the Art of Survival is a chief secret of success, but in this age of sanitary abuses our lives are mostly half-told tales. Our season ends before the trees of hope have time to ripen their fruit; before their day's work is done our toilers are overtaken by the shadows of approaching night. Sanitary reforms would undoubtedly lengthen our average term of life, and an increase of longevity alone would solve the most vexing riddles of existence: the apparent injustice of fate, the disproportion of merit and compensation, the aimlessness, the illusive promises and baffled hopes of life. For millions of our fellow-men an increase of health and longevity would suffice to make life decidedly worth living. Health lessens the temptations to many vices. Perfect health blesses its possessor with a spontaneous cheerfulness almost proof against the frowns of fortune and the cares of poverty. With a meal of barley cakes and milk, a straw couch, and scant clothing of homespun linen, a shepherd-boy in the highlands of the Austrian Alps may enjoy existence to a degree that exuberates in frolic and jubilant shouts, while all the resources of wealth cannot recall the sunshine which sickness has banished from the life of the dyspeptic glutton. If happiness could be computed by measure and weight, it would be found that her richest treasures are not stored in gilded walls, but

in the homes of frugal thrift, of rustic vigor and nature-loving independence. The sweetness of health reflects itself in grace of form and deportment, and wins friends where the elegance of studied manners gains only admirers. Health is also a primary condition of that clearness of mind the absence of which can be only partially compensated by the light of learning. Health is the basis of mental as of bodily vigor; country-bred boys have again and again carried off the prizes of academical honors from the pupils of refined cities, and the foremost reformers of all ages and countries have been men of the people; low-born, but not the less well-born, sons of hardy rustics and mechanics, from Moses, Socrates, Epicetetus, Jesus Ben Josef, and Mohammed, to Luther, Rousseau, Thomas Paine, and Abraham Lincoln.

C.—PERVERSION.

Habitual sin against the health-laws of Nature was originally chiefly a consequence of untoward circumstances. Slaves, paupers, immigrants to the inhospitable climes of the higher latitudes, were forced to adopt abnormal modes of life which, in the course of time, hardened into habits. Man, like all the varieties of his four-handed relatives, is a native of the tropics, and the diet of our earliest man-like ancestors was, in all probability, *frugal*: tree-fruits, berries, nuts, roots, and edible herbs and gums. But the first colonists of the winter lands were obliged to eke out an existence by eating the flesh of their fellow-creatures, and a carnivorous diet thus became the

habitual and, in many countries, almost the exclusive diet of the nomadic inhabitants.

Alcohol is a product of fermentation, and the avarice of a cruel master may have forced his slaves to quench their thirst with fermented must or hydromel till habit begot a baneful second nature, and the at first reluctant victims of intoxication learned to prefer *spoiled* to fresh grape-juice. Sedentary occupations, however distasteful at first, are apt to engender a sluggish aversion to physical exercise, and even habitual confinement in a vitiated atmosphere may at last become a second nature, characterized by a morbid dread of fresh air. The slaves of the Roman landowners had to pass their nights in prison-like dungeons, and may have contracted the first germ of that mental disease known as the night-air superstition, the idea, namely, that after dark the vitiated atmosphere of a stifling dormitory is preferable to the balm of the cooling night wind.

In modern times an unprecedented concurrence of circumstances has stimulated a feverish haste in the pursuit of wealth, and thus indirectly led to the neglect of personal hygiene. The abolition of the public festivals by which the potentates of the pagan empires compensated their subjects for the loss of political freedom, the heartless egotism of our wealthy Pharisees, venal justice, and the dire bondage of city life all help to stimulate a headlong race toward the goal of the promised land of ease and independence—a goal reached only by a favored few compared with the multitudes who daily drop down wayworn and exhausted.

But the deadliest blow to the cause of health was struck by the anti-natural fanaticism of the Middle Ages, the world-hating infatuation of the maniacs who depreciated every secular blessing as a curse in disguise, and despised their own bodies as they despised nature, life, and earth. The disciples of the world-renouncing messiah actually welcomed disease as a sign of divine favor, they gloried in decrepitude and deformity, and promoted the work of degeneration with a persevering zeal never exceeded by the enlightened benefactors of the human race. For a period of fifteen hundred years the ecclesiastic history of Europe is the history of a systematic war against the interests of the human body; the "mortification of the flesh" was enjoined as a cardinal duty of a true believer; health-giving recreations were suppressed, while health-destroying vices were encouraged by the example of the clergy; domestic hygiene was utterly neglected, and the founders of some twenty-four different monastic orders vied in the invention of new penances and systematic outrages upon the health of the poor convent-slaves. Their diet was confined to the coarsest and often most loathsome food; they were subjected to weekly bleedings, to profitless hardships and deprivations; their sleep was broken night after night; fasting was carried to a length which often avenged itself in permanent insanity; and their only compensation for a daily repetition of health-destroying afflictions was the permission to indulge in spiritual vagaries and spirituous poisons: the same bigots who grudged their followers a night of unbroken rest or a mouthful of

digestible food indulged them in quantities of alcoholic beverages that would have staggered the conscience of a modern beer-swiller.

The bodily health of a community was held so utterly below the attention of a Christian magistrate that every large city became a hotbed of contagious diseases; small-pox and scrofula became pandemic disorders; the pestilence of the Black Death ravaged Europe from end to end—nay, instead of trying to remove the cause of the evil, the wretched victims were advised to seek relief in prayer and self-torture, and a philosopher uttering a word of protest against such illusions would have risked to have his tongue torn out by the roots and his body consigned to the flames of the stake.

Mankind has never wholly recovered from that reign of insanity. Indifference to many of the plainest health-laws of nature is still the reproach of our so-called civilization. Our moralists rant about the golden streets of the New Jerusalem, but find no time to expurgate the slums of their own cities; our missionary societies spend millions to acquaint the natives of distant islands with the ceremony of baptism, but refuse to contribute a penny to the establishment of free public baths for the benefit of their poor neighbors, whose children are scourged or caged like wild beasts for trying to mitigate the martyrdom of the midsummer season by a bath in the waters of the next river. Temperance, indeed, is preached in the name of the miracle-monger who turned water into alcohol; but millions of toilers who seek to drown their misery in the Lethe of intoxication are

deprived of every healthier pastime; the magistrates of our wealthy cities rage with penal ordinances against the abettors of public amusements on the day when nine-tenths of our laborers find their only leisure for recreation. Poor factory children who would spend the holidays in the paradise of the green hills are lured into the baited trap of a Sabbath-school and bribed to memorize the stale twaddle of Hebrew ghost-stories or the records of fictitious genealogies; but the offer to enlarge the educational sphere of our public schools by the introduction of a health primer would be scornfully rejected as an attempt to divert the attention of the pupils from more important topics.

D.—PENALTIES OF NEGLECT.

But the laws of Nature cannot be outraged with impunity, and the aid of supernatural agencies has never yet protected our ghost-mongers from the consequences of their sins against the monitions of their physical conscience. The neglect of cleanliness avenges itself in diseases which no prayer can avert; during the most filthy and prayerful period of the Middle Ages, seven out of ten city-dwellers were subject to scrofula of that especially malignant form that attacks the glands and the arteries as well as the skin. Medical nostrums and clerical hocus-pocus of the ordinary sort were, indeed, so notoriously unavailing against that virulent affection that thousands of sufferers took long journeys to try the efficacy of a *king's* touch, as recorded by the unanimous testimony of contemporary writers, as well as in the still

current term of a *sovereign* remedy. A long foot-journey, with its opportunities for physical exercise, outdoor camps, and changes of diet, often really effected the desired result; but, on their return to their reeking hovels, the convalescents experienced a speedy relapse, and had either to repeat the wearisome journey or resign themselves to the "mysterious dispensation" of a Providence which obstinately refused to let miracles interfere with the normal operation of the physiological laws recorded in the protests of instinct. Stench, nausea, and sick-head-aches might, indeed, have enforced those protests upon the attention of the sufferers; but the disciples of Antinaturalism had been taught to mistrust the promptings of their natural desires, and to accept discomforts as signs of divine favor, or, in extreme cases, to trust their abatement to the intercession of the saints, rather than to the profane interference of secular science.

The dungeon-life of the monastic maniacs, and the abject submission to the nuisance of atmospheric impurities, avenged themselves in the ravages of pulmonary consumption; the votaries of dungeon-smells were taught the value of fresh air by the tortures of an affliction from which only the removal of the cause could deliver a victim, and millions of orthodox citizens died scores of years before the attainment of a life-term which a seemingly inscrutable dispensation of Heaven grants to the unbelieving savages of the wilderness. The cheapest of all remedies, fresh air, surrounded them in immeasurable abundance, craving admission and offering them the

aid which Nature grants even to the lowliest of her creatures, but a son of a miracle-working church had no concern with such things, and was enjoined to rely on the efficacy of mystic ceremonies: "If any man is sick among you, let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." "And the prayer of faith shall cure the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up."

Thousands of the fatuous bigots who prayed for "meekness of spirit" continued to gorge themselves with the food of carnivorous animals, and thus inflamed their passions with the sanguinary, remorseless propensities of those brutes. Luigi Cornaro, the Italian reformer, assures us that it was no uncommon thing for a nobleman or prelate of his century to swallow fourteen pounds of strong meats at a single meal, and that, after invoking the blessing of Heaven upon such a repast, the devourer of meat-pies would rise with his paunch distended "like the hide of a drowned dog." The "Love of Enemies," "forgiveness and meekness," were on their lips; but those fourteen pounds of meat-pie worked out their normal result; and among the carnivorous saints of that age we accordingly find men whose fiendish inhumanity would have appalled the roughest legionary of pagan Rome. Cæsar Borgia, the son of a highest ecclesiastic dignitary, a disciple of a priestly training-school, and himself a prince of the church, seems to have combined the stealthy cunning of a viper with the bloodthirst of a hyena. Four times he made and broke the most solemn treaties,

in order to get an opportunity to invade the territory of an unprepared neighbor. His campaigns were conducted with a truculence denounced even by his own allies; with his own hand he poisoned fourteen of his boon companions, in order to possess himself of their property; twenty-three of his political and clerical rivals were removed by the dagger of hired assassins or executed upon the testimony of suborned perjurers. He tried to poison his brother-in-law, Prince Alphonso of Aragon, in order to facilitate his design of seducing his own sister; he made repeated, and at last partly successful, attempts to poison the brother of his mother and his own father, the pope.

The heartless neglect of sanitary provisions for the comfort of the poor avenges itself in epidemics that visit the abodes of wealth as well as the hovels of misery. A stall-fed preacher of our southern seaport towns may circulate a petition for the suppression of Sunday excursions, in order to prevent the recreation-needing toilers of his community from leaving town on St. Collection Day; he may advocate the arrest of bathing schoolboys, in order to suppress an undue love of physical enjoyments, or to gratify a female tithe-payer who seeks an opportunity of displaying her prudish virtue at the expense of the helpless; he may vote to suppress outdoor sports in the cool of the late evening, when the inhabitants of the tenement streets are trying to enjoy an hour of extra Sabbatarian recreation—a privilege to be reserved for the saints who can rest six days out of seven, and on the seventh harvest the fruits of other men's labor. But epidemics refuse to recognize such dis-

tinctions, and the vomit of yellow fever will force the most reverend monopolist to disgorge the proceeds of the tithes coined from the misery of consumptive factory children. Nor can wealth purchase immunity from the natural consequences of habitual vice. The dyspeptic glutton is a Tantalus who starves in the midst of abundance. The worn-out tradesman, whose restless toil in the mines of mammon has led to asthma or consumption, would vainly offer to barter half his gold for half a year of health. Thousands of families who deny themselves every recreation, who linger out the summer in the sweltering city, and toil and save "for the sake of our dear children," have received Nature's verdict on the wisdom of their course in the premature death of those children.

E.—REDEMPTION.

It has often been said that the physical regeneration of the human race could be achieved without the aid of a miracle, if its systematic pursuit were followed with half the zeal which our stock-breeders bestow upon the rearing of their cows and horses. A general observance of the most clearly recognized laws of health would, indeed, abundantly suffice for that purpose. There is, for instance, no doubt that the morbid tendency of our indoor modes of occupation could be counteracted by gymnastics, and the trustees of our education fund should build a gymnasium near every town school. As a condition of health, pure air is as essential as pure water and food, and no house-owner should be permitted to sow

the seeds of deadly diseases by crowding his tenants into the back rooms of unaired and unairable slum-prisons. New cities should be projected on the plan of concentric rings of cottage suburbs (interspersed with parks and gardens), instead of successive strata of tenement flats.

In every large town all friends of humanity should unite for the enforcement of Sunday freedom, and spare no pains to brand the Sabbath bigots as enemies of the human race. We should found Sunday gardens, where our toil-worn fellow-citizens could enjoy their holidays with outdoor sports and outdoor dances, free museums, temperance drinks, healthy refreshments, collections of botanical and zoölogical curiosities. Country excursions on the only leisure day of the laboring classes should be as free as air and sunshine, and every civilized community should have a Recreation League for the promotion of that purpose.

In the second century of our chronological era the cities of the Roman empire vied in the establishment of free public baths. Antioch alone had fourteen of them; Alexandria not less than twelve, and Rome itself at least twenty, some of them of such magnificence and extent that their foundations have withstood the ravages of sixteen centuries. Many of those establishments were entirely free, and even the *Thermæ*, or luxurious Warm Baths, of Caracalla admitted visitors for a gate-fee which all but the poorest could afford. Our boasted civilization will have to follow such examples before it can begin to deserve its name; and even the free circus games

(by no means confined to the combats of armed prize-fighters) were preferable to the fanatical suppression of all popular sports which made the age of Puritanism the dreariest period of that dismal era known as the Reign of the Cross.

The preservation of health is at least not less important than the preservation of Hebrew mythology; and communities who force their children to sacrifice a large portion of their time to the study of Asiatic miracle legends might well permit them to devote an occasional hour or two to the study of modern physiology. We should have health primers and teachers of hygiene, and the most primitive district school should find time for a few weekly lessons in the rudiments of sanitary science, such as the importance of ventilation, the best modes of exercise, the proper quality and quantity of our daily food, the significance of the stimulant habit, the use and abuse of dress, etc.

Such text-books would prepare the way for health lectures, for health legislation and the reform of municipal hygiene. The untruth that "a man can not be defiled by things entering him from without" has been thoroughly exploded by the lessons of science, and should no longer excuse the neglect of that *frugality* which in the times of the pagan republics formed the best safeguard of national vigor. Milk, bread, and fruit, instead of greasy viands, alcohol, and narcotic drinks, would soon modify the mortality statistics of our large cities, and we should not hesitate to recognize the truth that the remark-

able longevity of the Jews and Mohammedans has a great deal to do with their dread of impure food.

CHAPTER II.

STRENGTH.

A.—LESSONS OF INSTINCT.

Bodily vigor is the basis of mental and physical health. Strength is power, and the instinctive love of invigorating exercise manifests itself in the young of all but the lowest brutes. The bigot who undermines the health of his children by stinting their outdoor sport as "worldly vanity," and "exercise that profiteth but little," is shamed by animals who lead their young in races and trials of strength. Thus the female fox will train her cubs; the doe will race and romp with her fawn, the mare with her colt. Monkeys (like the squirrels of our northern forests) can be seen running up and down a tree and leaping from branch to branch, without any conceivable purpose but the enjoyment of the exercise itself; dogs run races, young lions wrestle and paw each other in a playful trial of prowess; even birds can be seen sporting in the air, and dolphins on the play-fields of the ocean. In nearly all classes of the vertebrate animals the rivalry of the males is decided by a trial of strength, and the female unhesitatingly accepts the victor as the fittest representative of his species.

Normal children are passionately fond of athletic sports. In western Yucatan I saw Indian girls climb

trees with the agility of a spider-monkey, and laughingly pelt each other with the fruits of the *Adansonia* fig. The children of the South-sea Islanders vie in aquatic gymnastics. Spartan girls joined in the foot-races of their brothers, and by the laws of Lycurgus were not permitted to marry till they had attained a prescribed degree of proficiency in a number of athletic exercises. Race-running and wrestling were the favorite pastimes of young Romans in the undegenerate age of the republic; and, in spite of all restraints, similar propensities still manifest themselves in our school-boys. They pass the intervals of their study-hours in competitive athletics, rather than in listless inactivity, and brave frosts and snowstorms to get the benefit of outdoor exercise even in midwinter. They love health-giving sports for their own sake, as if instinctively aware that bodily strength will further every victory in the arena of life.

The enthusiasm that gathered about the heroic games of Olympia made those festivals the brightest days in the springtime of the human race. The million-voiced cheers that hailed the victor of the *pentathlon* have never been heard again on earth since the manliest and noblest of all recreations were suppressed by order of a crowned bigot. The rapture of competitive athletics is a bond which can obliterate the rancor of all baser rivalries, and still unites hostile tribes in the arena of pure manhood: as in Algiers, where the Bedouins joined in the gymnastic prize-games of their French foemen: the same foemen whose banquets they would have refused to share even at the bidding of starvation. In Buda-Pesth I once

- witnessed a performance of the German athlete Weitzel, and still remember the irrepressible enthusiasm of two broad-shouldered Turks who crowded to the edge of the platform, and, with waving kerchiefs, joined in the cheers of the uncircumcised spectators.

B.—REWARDS OF CONFORMITY.

The "survival of the fittest" means, in many important respects, the survival of the strongest. In a state of nature weakly animals yield to their stronger rivals; the stoutest lion, the swiftest tiger, has a superior chance of obtaining prey; the stouter bulls of the herd defy the attack of the wolves who overcome the resistance of the weaker individuals; the fleetest deer has the best chance to escape the pursuit of the hunter.

A state of civilization does only apparently equalize such differences. The invention of gunpowder has armed the weak with the power of a giant; but the issue of international wars will always be biased by the comparative strength of sinew and steadiness of nerve of the men that handle those improved weapons. In the last Franco-Prussian war the French were favored by an undoubted superiority of arms, but they were utterly beaten by a nation whose sons had devoted their youth to gymnastics. The arms of the Gothic giants were of the rudest description: hunting-spears and clumsy battle-axes; but those axes broke the ranks of the Roman legionaries, with their polished swords and elaborate tactics. For the last two thousand years the wars

that decided the international rivalries of Asia, Europe, and North America nearly always ended with the victory of a northern nation over its southern neighbors. The men of the north could not always boast a superiority in science or arms, nor in number, nor in the advantage of a popular cause; but the rigor of their climate exacts a valiant effort in the struggle for existence, and steels the nerves even of an otherwise inferior race. "*Fortis Fortuna adjuvat*," said a Roman proverb, which means literally that Fortune favors the *strong*, and which has been well rendered in the paraphrase of a modern translator: "Force begets fortitude and conquers fortune." Nor is that bias of fate confined to the battles of war. In the contests of peace, too, other things being equal, the strong arm will prevail against the weak, the stout heart against the faint. Bodily strength begets self-reliance. "Blest are the *strong*," for they shall possess the kingdom of the earth," would be an improved variation of the gospel text. The Germanic nations (including the Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon) who have most faithfully preserved the once universal love of manly sports, have prevailed against their rivals in the arena of industry and science, as well as of war.

An American manufacturer, who established a branch of his business at Havre, France, hired American and British workmen at double wages, maintaining that he found it the cheapest plan, since one of his expensive laborers could do the work of three natives. In the seaport towns, even of South America and Southern Europe, a British sailor

is always at a premium. American industry is steadily forcing its way further south, and may yet come to limit the fields of its enterprise only by the boundaries of the American continent. From the smallest beginnings, a nation of iron-fisted rustics has repeatedly risen to supremacy in arms and arts. Two hundred years before the era of Norman conquests in France, Italy, and Great Britain, the natives of Norway were but a race of hardy hunters and fishermen. A century after the battle of Xeres de la Frontera, the half-savage followers of Musa and Tarik had founded high schools of science and industry. And, as the fairest flower springs from the hardy thorn, the brightest flowers of art and poetry have immortalized the lands of heroic freemen, rather than of languid dreamers. The same nation that carried the banners of freedom through the battle-storm of Marathon and Salamis, adorned its temples with the sculptures of Phidias and its literature with the masterpieces of Sophocles and Simonides.

Physical vigor is also the best guarantee of longevity. Nature exempts the children of the south from many cares; yet in the stern climes of the higher latitudes Health seems to make her favorite home; in spite of snowstorms and bitter frosts the robust Scandinavian outlives the languid Italian. *In spite* of a rigorous climate, I say, for that his length of life is the reward of hardy habits is proved by the not less remarkable longevity of the hardy Arab and the manful Circassian, in climes that differ from that of Norway as Mexico and Virginia differ from Labrador. Men of steeled sinews overcome disease

as they brave the perils of wars and the hardships of the wilderness ; hospital-surgeons know how readily the semi-savages of a primitive borderland recover from injuries that would send the effeminate city-dweller to the land of the shades. Toil-hardened laborers, too, share such immunities. On the 25th of March, 1887, Thomas McGuire, the foreman of a number of laborers employed at the night-shaft of the Croton Aqueduct, fell to the bottom of the pit, a distance of ninety-five feet, and was drawn up in a comatose condition, literally drenched in his own blood. At the Bellevue Hospital (city of New York) the examining surgeon found him still alive, but gave him up for lost when he ascertained the extent of his injuries. Both his arms were broken near the shoulder, both thighs were fractured, his skull was horribly shattered about the left temple and frontal region, six of his ribs were broken and their splinters driven into the lungs. There seemed no hope whatever for him, and, after the administration of an anesthetic, he was put in a cot and left alone to die. To the utter surprise of the attending surgeon, the next morning found the mass of broken bones still breathing. His fever subsided ; he survived a series of desperate operations, survived an apparently fatal hemorrhage, and continued to improve from day to day, till about the middle of June he recovered his complete consciousness, and was able to sit up and answer the questions of the medical men who, in ever increasing numbers, had visited his bedside for the last three weeks. As a newspaper correspondent sums up his case : " His strong constitution had

repulsed the assaults of death, till finally the grim monster went away to seek a less obstinate victim." And, moreover, the exercise of athletic sports lessens the danger of such accidents: a trained gymnast will preserve his equilibrium where a weakling would break his neck.

According to the mythus of the Nature-worshiping Greeks, the darling of Venus was a hunter (not a tailor or a hair-dresser), and the gift of beauty is, indeed, bestowed on the lovers of health-giving sports, far oftener than on the votaries of fashion. Supreme beauty is country-bred; the daughters of peasants, of village squires, of fox-hunting barons, have again and again eclipsed the galaxies of court belles. Country boys have won hearts that seemed proof against the charm of city gallants. "I have seen many a handsome man in my time," says old Mrs. Montague in Barry Cornwall's "Table Talk," "but never such a pair of eyes as young Robbie Burns kept flashing from under his beautiful brow." "Women will condone many a moral blemish in a suitor," says Arthur Schopenhauer; "they will pardon rudeness, egotism, and intellectual poverty; they will forgive even homeliness sooner than effeminacy. Instinct seems to tell them that *in the result of marriage a mother's influence can neutralize any defect but that.*"

C.—PERVERSION.

The history of Antinaturalism is the history of a persistent war against the manlier instincts of the human race. Buddha and his Galilean disciples

considered the body the enemy of the soul. According to their system of ethics, Nature and all natural instincts are wholly evil ; the renunciation of earth and all earthly hopes is their price of salvation, and the chief endeavor of their insane zeal is directed against the interests of the human body. The gospel of Buddha Sakiamuni, and its revamp, the "New Testament" of the Galilean messiah, abound with the ravings of an *anti-physical* fanaticism as unknown to the ethics of the manly Hebrews as to the philosophy of the earth-loving Greeks and Romans. The duty of physical education and health-culture was entirely ignored in the gospel of the life-despising Nazarene. "A healthy mind in a healthy body," was the ideal of the Greeian philosopher. A world-renouncing mind in a crushed body, was the ideal of the Christian moralists. The sculptors and painters of the Middle Ages vied in the representation of cadaverous saints, hollow-eyed devotees, and ghastly self-torturers. Physical training was tolerated as a secular evil indispensable for such purposes of the militant church as the hunting of heretics and the invasion of Musulman empires ; but its essential importance was vehemently disclaimed ; the superior merit of sacrificing health to the interests of a body-despising soul was constantly commended, and the founders of the monastic orders that superseded the pagan schools of philosophy did not hesitate to enforce their dogmas by aggressive measures ; the wretched convent slaves had to submit to weekly bleedings and strength-reducing penances ; their novices were barbarously scourged for the clandestine indulgence of a linger-

ing love for health-giving sports—wrestling in the vacant halls of their cloister-prison, or racing conies on their way to their begging-grounds. The Olympic festivals were suppressed by order of a Christian emperor. The fathers of the church lost no opportunity to inveigh with rancorous invectives against the pagan culture of the manly powers, “so inimical to true contriteness of spirit and meek submission to the yoke of the gospel.” The followers of Origenes actually practiced *castration* as the most effectual means of taming the stubborn instincts of unregenerate boys. Their exemplar, who had recommended that plan for years, came at last to suspect the necessity of eradicating a germ of worldliness in his own mind, and proceeded to accomplish that purpose by emasculating himself. The anti-physical principle of European Buddhism manifests itself likewise in the fanaticism of the Scotch ascetics who raged against the scant physical recreations of a people already sufficiently afflicted by climatic vicissitudes and the parsimony of an indigent soil. It still survives in the bigotry of those modern zealots who groan at sight of a horse-race or wrestling-match, and would fain suppress the undue worldliness of ball-playing children. Manly pastimes were banished from the very dreams of a world to come; and while the heroes of Walhalla contest the prizes of martial sports, and the guests of Olympus share in the joyful festivals of the gods, the saints of our priest-blighted heaven need the alternative of an eternal hell to enjoy the prospect of an everlasting Sabbath-school.

Trials of strength and of skill,
Rewarded by festive assemblies,
Feasts in the halls of gods, where the voice of the muses
Answered in songs to the ravishing lyre of Apollo,

quotes a German poet from the Vulgata, "when suddenly," he adds, "a gaunt, blood-streaming Jew rushed in with a crown of thorns on his head and a huge wooden cross on his shoulder, which cross he dashed on the banquet table of the appalled gods, who turned paler and paler till they finally faded away into a pallid mist. And a dreary time then began; the world turned chill and bleak. The merry gods had departed; Olympus became a Golgatha, where sickly, skinned, and roasted deities sneaked about mournfully, nursing their wounds and chanting doleful hymns. Religion, once a worship of joy, became a whining worship of sorrow."

D.—PENALTIES OF NEGLECT.

But Nature had her revenge, and the despisers of their own bodies became so truly contemptible that in comparison the rudest barbarians of antiquity seemed respectable men. The neglect of physical exercise avenged itself in loathsome diseases, the perverted instincts exploded in vices; the monkish self-abasers became caricatures of manhood: bloated, whining, mean, and viciously sensual wretches, the laughing-stock of foreign nations and the curse and disgrace of their own. Physically, mentally, and morally, the earth-despising convent drone represented the vilest type of degeneration to which the manhood of our race has ever been degraded, and the

enforced veneration of such monsters, as exemplars of perfection, has perverted the ethical standards of mankind to a degree for which our present generation is as yet far from having wholly recovered. The love of athletic recreations is still smirched with the stigma of the Middle Ages; "respectability" is too often mistaken for a synonym of pedantry and conventional effeminacy; parents still frown upon the health-giving sports of their children; vice still sneaks in the disguise of saintliness and world-renouncing aversion to physical recreations.

The degeneration of many once manful races has reached an incurable phase: the listless resignation to physical abasement and decrepitude. Earth has spurned her despisers; millions of priest-slaves in southern Europe have lost the inheritance of their fathers, and have to till the soil for aliens and despots. The arbitrament of war has made them taste the lowest dregs of national humiliation; the life-long worshippers of whining saints appealed in vain to the God of Battles, and were forced to eat dust at the feet of the despised Infidel and heretic. The ships of the Spanish Armada were consecrated by a chorus of ranting priests commending them to the miraculous protection of heaven; and heaven's answer came in the blast of the hurricane that buried their fleet in the depths of the sea. The same nation once more invoked the aid of the saints for the protection of an armament against the great naval powers of the nineteenth century. The ships were ceremoniously baptized with the most fulsomely pious names: "The Holy Savior of the World," "Saint Maria," "Saint

Joseph," "The Most Holy Trinity," and sent forth in full reliance on the protection of supernatural agencies. But in the encounter with Nelson's self-relying veterans the sacred bubble at once collapsed. St. Joseph's impotence howled in vain for the assistance of the Holy Ghost. The Savior of the World could save himself only by a shameful flight, and the Most Holy Trinity succumbed to a decided surplus of holes.

E.—REDEMPTION.

In the work of physical regeneration Nature meets the reformer more than half-way. Our children need but little encouragement to break the fetters of the fatuous restraint that dooms them to a life of physical apathy. They ask nothing but time and opportunity to redeem the coming generation from the stigma of unmanliness and debility. Physical and intellectual education should again go hand in hand if we would promote the happiness of a redeemed race on the plan that made the age of Grecian philosophy and gymnastics the brightest era in the history of mankind. Physical reform should be promoted by the systematic encouragement of athletic sports; every township should have a free gymnasium, every village a free foot-race park; by prize-offers for supremacy in competitive gymnastics wealthy philanthropists could turn thousands of boy toppers into young athletes. We should have athletic county meetings, state field-days, and national or international Olympiads.

Educational ethics should fully recognize the

rights of the body. We should admit the unorthodox, but also undeniable, truth that an upright and magnanimous disposition is a concomitant of bodily strength, while fickleness, duplicity, and querulous injustice are the characteristics of debility. We should teach our children that a healthy mind can dwell only in a healthy body, and that he who pretends to find no time to take care of his health is a workman who thinks it a waste of time to take care of his tools.

CHAPTER III.

CHASTITY.

A.—LESSONS OF INSTINCT.

The manifestations of the sexual instinct are guided by the plain and emphatic monitions of a physical conscience, developed partly with the primordial evolution of our organism, partly by the hereditary experience transmitted during the social development of our species. The guardians of our prevailing system of ethics, too, have enforced the regulations of their added supervision with a zeal apparently justified by the importance of its purpose; but an analysis of those regulations strikingly illustrates the perils of abandoning the plain path of Nature, to follow the vagaries of hyper-physical dogmatists. The Nature-guided bias of sexual intuitions refers to time, selection, and circumstantial restrictions. The control of our clerical moralists ignores the first and second law of modification, while their recognition of

the third involves a large number of irrelevant and irrational precepts.

In a state of nature, instinct and circumstances coöperate in the prevention of sexual precocity. Active exercise furnishes a vent to those potential energies which physical sloth forces to explode in sensual excesses. The adult males of all species of vertebrate animals fiercely resent the encroachments of immature rivals. Savages postpone their nuptials to a period of life when the possession of property or prestige enables them to undertake the adequate support of a family. In countries where both sexes spend a large portion of their time in outdoor occupations, precocious prurience is very rare. In the pastoral highlands of the Austrian Alps (Styria, Salzburg, and the Tyrol), boys and girls meet only at church festivals, but enjoy their amusements apart, the girls in dances and singing-picnics; the boys in shooting-matches, foot-races, and mountain excursions. A lad under eighteen caught in flirtations is at once laughed back to manlier pastimes, while girls even more jealously guard the exclusiveness of their festivals, and would chase away an intrusive bachelor as promptly as a trespassing boy. Lycurgus fixes the marriageable age of a groom at thirty years, of a bride at twenty. Among the martial Visigoths thirty and twenty-five years were the respective minima.

The importance of limiting the license of precocious passion has never been directly denied, but the significance of the instinct of *sexual selection* seems to have been unaccountably misunderstood. Marriages

without the sanction, and even against the direct protest, of that instinct are constantly encouraged. "Love matches," in the opinion of thousands of Christian parents, seem to be thought fit only for the characters of a sentimental romance, or the heroes of the stage. The overpowering sway of a passion which asserts its claims against all other claims whatever ought sufficiently to proclaim the importance of its purpose and the absurdity of the mistake which treats its appeals as a matter of frivolous fancy.

And, in fact, only the universality of that passion transcends the importance of its *direction*. For, while the sexual instinct, *per se*, guarantees the perpetuation of the species, the instinct of selection refers to *the composition of the next generation*, of which it thus determines the quality as the other determines the quantity. And just as the vital powers of the individual organism strive back from disease to health, the genius of the species seeks to reestablish the perfection of the type, and to neutralize the effects of degenerating influences. We accordingly find that the individuals of each sex seek the *complement* of their own defects. Small women prefer tall men; fickle men worship strong-minded women; dark grooms select fair brides; practical business men are attracted by romantic girls; city belles admire a rustic Hercules, and *vice versa*. Exceptional intensity of mutual passion denotes exceptional fitness of the contemplated union, or rather the results of that union; for, here as elsewhere, Nature, in a choice of consequences, will sac-

rifice the interests of individuals to the interests of the species. Passionate love, accordingly, is ever ready to attain its purpose at the price of the temporary advantages of life, nay, of life itself; and the voluntary renunciation of such advantage is, therefore, in the truest sense a self-sacrifice for the benefit of posterity, a surrender of personal interests to the welfare of the species. In spite of the far-gone perversion of our ethical standards, we accordingly find an instinctive recognition of such truth in the popular verdict that applauds heroic loyalty to a higher law when lovers break the fetters of sordid interest or caste restrictions. In their hearts, the very flatterers condemn the decision of a bride who has sacrificed love to wealth, even in obedience to a parental mandate, or the monitions of Nature-estranged moralists.

In extremes of adverse circumstances, love itself, however, will often voluntarily withdraw its claim. Hopeless inequality of station, disease, and irremediable disabilities will extinguish the flame of a passion that would have defied time and torture. A lover struck with a cureless malady will shrink from transmitting his affliction; a proud barbarian will refuse to make a refined bride the witness of his humiliations. The perils of consanguinity may reveal themselves to a sort of hereditary (if not aboriginal) instinct; and the discovery of an unsuspected relationship has more than once deadened desire as if by magic, and turned love into self-possessed friendship.

B.—REWARDS OF CONFORMITY.

In the oldest chronicle of the human race the historian of the patriarchs has preserved a genealogical record which seems to have been transmitted for the special purpose of showing the casual connection of continence and longevity. That record (the fifth chapter of Genesis) states the age and the marriage date of the progenitors of ten different generations, with a regularly correspondent decrease of period in both respects, from the first to the sixth, when both increase in a single instance and then decrease to the end of the list. The lessons of that record might be read in every branch of every genealogical chronicle from Noah to the latest posterity of his sons. In all countries, among all nations of all times, premature courtship has courted premature death. Continence during the years of development rewards itself in health and vigor, both of body and of mind. Success in every line of endeavor is the reward of reserved strength. That strength becomes available in the needs of after years, and is the chief basis of that love of independence and impatience of tyranny found only among manful and continent nations. The love of the gentlest females is reserved for the manliest males of their species, while precocious coveters of such prizes meet with humiliations and disappointments. Those who forbear to anticipate the promptings of Nature can rely on the favor of her undiminished aid; and to such only is given the power of that "love that spurs to exertions."

And if marriages are planned in heaven, that

heaven manifests its will in the appeals of love, and not in the counsels of avarice or expedience. If the sorrows of poverty-straitened love could be measured against the misery of disgust-blighted wealth, it would be admitted that the course of true love is, after all, the smoothest, in the long run as well as in the beginning. For the inspirations of genuine love will resist the assaults of misfortune as they defied its menace, and the ban of prejudice can detract but little from the happiness of a union hallowed by the sanction of Nature.

C.—PERVERSION.

The enemies of Nature have not failed to pervert an instinct which they could not wholly suppress. That this suppression was actually attempted in the first outbreak of antinatural insanity is abundantly proved by the history of the early Christian sects, the Novatians, the Marcionites, and the followers of self-mutilating Origenes. Absolute abstinence from sexual intercourse was made the chief text of "unworldliness." Novices were brought up in strict seclusion; mutilation was the usual penalty of violated vows, but was also practiced as an *à-priori* safeguard against the awakening of the sexual instinct. St. Clemens of Alexandria, one of the few semi-rational leaders of the patristic era, gives an appalling account of the consequences of those crimes against Nature, and vehemently denounces the fatuous dogma, which was nevertheless only modified, but never wholly renounced, by the moralists of a church whose ethics were undoubtedly derived from the physical nihilism

of Buddha Sakiamuni. The Galilean apostle of Antinaturalism indirectly inculcates the superior merit of suppression in his allusions to "eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake," and the saints "who neither marry nor are given in marriage," as well as in the example of his personal asceticism; and Paul distinctly informs us that marriage is only a lesser evil, a compromise with the passions of the unregenerate, which perfect virtue should forbear to gratify: "It is good for a man *not to touch a woman* ; nevertheless to avoid . . . ;" etc. Such dogmas bore their natural fruit in the society-shunning fanaticism of hermits and anchorites; in aberrations *à la* Origenes, and in that dreadful source of unnatural vice, the enforced celibacy of monks and priests.

In the philosophy of those moralists, the physical interests of mankind were of no moment whatever. The church that burnt nuns and priests for yielding to the power of an irrepressible instinct, has in millions of cases sanctioned the nuptials of immature minors and the nature-insulting unions of avarice and flunkeyism. For the sake of a small fee it has encouraged the marriage of reluctant paupers, but howled its anathemas against the unions of orthodox Christians with gentiles, Jews, or Christian dissenters. Thus encouraged, Christian parents have not hesitated to sacrifice the highest interests of their children and children's children to considerations of "expedience." In Spanish America thousands of baby-brides—girls of twelve and thirteen; nay, even of ten years—are delivered to the marital tyranny of wealthy old debauchees; in France, Italy, and Aus-

tria millions of mutually reluctant boys and girls are compelled to wed in obedience to the decision of a business committee of relatives and panders. In the cities of the northland nations marriages of expedience, though rarer, are still of daily occurrence. "Whatever is natural is wrong," was the shibboleth of the medieval dogmatists, and the protests of instinct were suppressed in the name of morality.

D.—PENALTIES OF NEGLECT.

Next to dietetic abuses, premature and unfit marriage is undoubtedly the most fruitful cause of the degeneration of the human species. The penalties of Nature, which every husbandman knows to avoid in the case of his cattle, are recklessly risked by parents and guardians of helpless children—perhaps in the vague hope that the normal consequences might be averted by the intercession of supernatural agencies. But miracles have ceased to suspend the operation of Nature's laws, and it would not be an over-estimate to say that a hundred million Christians annually incur the penalty of moral or physical sufferings and premature death, as a retribution of their own or their parents' outrages against the laws of the sexual instinct. Premature intercourse of the sexes stunts the further development of the organism and entails physical defects on the offspring of a series of successive generations. Puny, weakly, and scrofulous children people the cities of southern Europe from Havre to Messina, though infant mortality has assumed proportions which partly counter-

act the evil by the sternest of Nature's remedies. Our fatuous modes of indoor education, combined with the influence of a stimulating diet (meat, pepper-sauces, and coffee, instead of fruit, bread, and milk) systematically promote premature prurience. Our school-boys are thus driven to vices of which they know neither the name nor the physiological significance, though, like the victims of convent-life, they suffer the consequences—

Losing their beauty and their native grace,
with but a small chance of subsequent redemption by healthier occupations. The monasteries of southern Europe are foster-schools of even more baneful vices—crimes against Nature, which in the slave-dens of the Middle Ages were more frequent than in the most dissolute cities of pagan antiquity. Dr. Layton's report on the result of the "Royal Commission of Investigation" (1538) describes the moral status of the British convents as an absolute *ne plus ultra* of imaginable corruption. The memoirs of Guiccardini and Pedro Sanchez depict a depth of immorality that would have revolted the libertines of the Neronic era. The indictment of Pope John XXII. contains forty-six specifications that can hardly be quoted in Latin. Jordanus Bruno, however, sums up the secret of such aberrations:

Insani fugiant mundum, immundumque sequuntur.
(The maniacs, despising earth, stray into unearthly abominations.)

The absurd interdictions of marriage on account of a difference in speculative opinions were for centuries

enforced with all the truculence of Inquisitorial butcher-laws; the espouser of a Jewess or a Morisca was burnt at the stake, together with his bride; even clandestine intercourse with an unbelieving paramour was punished with barbarous severity; and a similar prejudice still frowns upon the loves of Catholics and Protestants, of Christians and Mohammedans, and even Freethinkers. In Ireland the priest-encouraged custom of early marriages has filled the rural districts with starving children; in thousands of cities marriages of expedience invoke the curse of Nature on the traitors to the highest interests of our species. Every marriage, unsanctioned by love, avenges itself on several generations of innocent offspring, as well as directly in blighted hopes and years of unavailing regrets.

E.—REFORM.

Before we can hope to abate the prevalence of genetic abuses we must promote a more general recognition of the truth that the organism of the human body is subject to the same laws that govern the organic functions of our fellow-creatures; and that health does not dispense its blessings as a reward of prayer and theological conformity, but of conformity to the promptings of our sanitary intuitions. We must dispel the delusion which hopes to conciliate the favor of a miracle-working deity by sacrificing the physical interests of our species to the interests of a clerical dogma.

Like the seductions of Intemperance, the temptations of precocious Incontinence may be counteracted

by more abundant opportunities of diverting pastimes. According to the significant allegory of a Grecian myth, Diana, the goddess of hunters and forest-dwellers, was the adversary of Venus, and outdoor exercise is, indeed, the best preventive of sexual aberrations. Athletes are instinctively continent. Sensuality seems incompatible with a hardy, active mode of life, as that of hunters, trappers, and backwoodsmen. The stigma of public opinion alone would, however, suffice to reduce the frequency of premature marriages; for, in the island of Corsica, where the recognition of their baneful tendency is based on purely economical considerations (the perils of over-population), the dread of social ostracism has proved more deterrent than the fear of poverty and starvation.

In a community of *Reformants* (as the German philosopher Schelling proposed to call the friends of reform) twenty-five and thirty years should be accepted as the lawful minima of a marriage age, and the teachers of Secularism should lose no opportunity to plead the cause of Nature against the usurpations of priestcraft and conventionalism. Public opinion should be trained to the recognition of the truth that the sacrifice of love to lucre, caste-prejudice, and bigotry is a crime against the genius of mankind, and that a marriage, vetoed by the verdict of Nature, cannot be hallowed by the mumbling of a priest.

CHAPTER IV.

TEMPERANCE.

A.—LESSONS OF INSTINCT.

Instinct is hereditary experience. The lessons derived from the repetition of pleasant or painful impressions have been transmitted from an infinite number of generations, till impending dangers have come to proclaim themselves by instinctive dread, opportune benefits by instinctive desire. The shudder that warns us to recede from the brink of a steep cliff is felt even by persons who have never personally experienced the peril of falling from the rocks of a precipice. Mountain breezes are more attractive than swamp odors; the fumes of a foul dungeon warn off a child who has had as yet no opportunity to ascertain the danger of breathing contaminated air. A few years ago I bought a pet fox, with a litter of cubs, who were soon after orphaned by the escape of their mother. They had to be fed by hand; and, among other proceeds of a forage, my neighbor's boy once brought them a bundle of lizards, and a dead rattlesnake. For the possession of those lizards there was at once an animated fight, but at sight of the serpent the little gluttons turned tail and retreated to the farther end of their kennel. They were not a month old when I bought them, and could not possibly have seen a rattlesnake before or known the effects of its bite from personal experience; but instinct at once informed them that an encounter with a reptile of that sort had brought some of their forefathers to grief.

The vegetable kingdom, that provides food for nine-tenths of all living creatures, abounds with an endless variety of edible fruits, seeds, and herbs, but also with injurious and even deadly products, often closely resembling the favorite food-plants of animals; which in a state of Nature are nevertheless sure to avoid mistake, and select their food by a faculty of recognizing differences that might escape the attention even of a trained botanist. The chief medium of that faculty is the sense of smell in the lower, and the sense of taste in the higher animals. In monkeys, for instance, the olfactory organs are rather imperfectly developed, and I have often seen them peel an unknown fruit with their fingers and then cautiously raise it to their lips and rub it to and fro before venturing to bring their teeth into play. The preliminary test, however, always sufficed to decide the question in a couple of seconds. The Abyssinian mountaineers who catch baboons by fuddling them with plum brandy have to disguise the taste of the liquor with a large admixture of syrup before they can deceive the warning instincts of their victims. Where copper mines discharge their drainage into a water-course, deer and other wild animals have been known to go in quest of distant springs rather than quench their thirst with the polluted water.

That protective instincts of that sort are shared even by the lowest animals is proved by the experiment of the philosopher Ehrenberg, who put a drop of alcohol into a bottle of pond water, and under the lens of his microscope saw a swarm of *infusoria* precipitate themselves to the bottom of the vessel.

Animals in a state of Nature rarely or never eat to an injurious excess ; the apparent surfeits of wolves, serpents, vultures, etc., alternate with long fasts, and are digested as easily as a hunter, after missing his breakfast and dinner, would be able to digest an abundant supper. Instinct indicates even the most propitious time for indulging in repletion. The noon heat of a midsummer day seems to suspend the promptings of appetite ; cows can be seen resting drowsily at the foot of a shade-tree ; deer doze in mountain glens and come out to browse in moonlight ; panthers cannot afford to miss an opportunity to slay their game at noon, but are very apt to hide the carcass and come back to devour it in the cool of the evening.

The products of fermentation are so repulsive to the higher animals that only the distress of actual starvation would tempt a monkey to touch a rotten apple or quench his thirst with acidulated grape-juice. Poppy fields need no fence ; tobacco leaves are in no danger of being nibbled by browsing cattle. Nature seems to have had no occasion for providing instinctive safeguards against such out-of-the-way things as certain mineral poisons ; yet the taste of arsenic, though not violently repulsive (like that of the more common, and therefore more dangerous, vegetable poisons), is certainly not attractive, but rather insipid, and a short experience seems to supplement the defects of instinct in that respect. Trappers know that poisoned baits after a while lose their seductiveness, and old rats have been seen

driving their young from a dish of arsenic-poisoned gruel.

Certainly no animal would feel any natural inclination to seek arsenic or alcohol for its own sake, and there is no reason to suppose that man, in that respect, differs from every known species of his fellow-creatures. Our clerical temperance lecturers rant about "the lusts of the unregenerate heart," the "weakness of the flesh," the "danger of yielding to the promptings of appetite," as if Nature herself would tempt us to our ruin, and the path of safety could be learned only from preternatural revelation. But the truth is that to the palate of a child, even the child of a habitual drunkard, the taste of alcohol is as repulsive as that of turpentine or bitterwood. Tobacco fumes and the stench of burning opium still nauseate the children of the habitual smoker as they would have nauseated the children of the patriarchs. The first cigar demonstrates the virulence of nicotine by vertigo and sick headaches; the first glass of beer is rejected by the revolt of the stomach; the *fauces* contract and writhe against the first dram of brandy. Nature records her protest in the most unmistakable language of instinct, and only the repeated and continued disregard of that protest at last begets the abnormal craving of that *poison-thirst* which clerical blasphemers ascribe to the promptings of our natural appetites. They might as well make us believe in a natural passion for dungeon air, because the prisoners of the Holy Inquisition at last lost their love of liberty and came to prefer the stench of their sub-

terranean black-holes to the breezes of the free mountains.

The craving for hot spices, for strong meats, and such abominations as fetid cheese and fermented cabbage have all to be artificially acquired; and in regard to the selection of our proper food the instincts of our young children could teach us more than a whole library of ascetic twaddle. Not for the sake of "mortifying the flesh," but on the plain recommendation of the natural senses that prefer palatable to disgusting food, the progeny of Adam could be guided in the path of reform and learn to avoid forbidden fruit by the symptoms of its forbidding taste.

B.—REWARDS OF CONFORMITY.

There is a tradition that the ancient Thessalians made it a rule that the guests of their banquets must get drunk on pain of expulsion. To let anyone remain sober, they argued, would not be just to the befuddled majority, of whose condition he might be tempted to take all sorts of advantage. If the evils of drunkenness were undeserved afflictions, it would certainly be true that sobriety would give an individual an almost unfair advantage over the rest of his fellow-men. He would be an archer trying his skill against hoodwinked rivals, a runner challenging the speed of shackled competitors. There is not a mechanical or industrial avocation in which sobriety does not give a man the advantage which health and freedom confer over crippling disease. For the baneful effects of intemperance are by no means limited

to the moments of actual intoxication, but react on the half-lucid intervals, and even on the after years of the reformed toper. Temperance, in the widest sense, of abstinence from unfit food and drink, would be the best gift which the fairies could bestow on a favorite child, for the blessing of frugal habits includes almost all other blessings whatever. Spontaneous gayety, the sunshine of the unclouded soul, is dimmed by the influence of the first poison-habit, and the regretful retrospects to the "lost paradise of childhood" are founded chiefly on the contrast of poison-engendered distempers with the moral and physical health of earlier years. Temperance prolongs that sunshine to the evening of life. By temperance alone the demon of life-weariness can be kept at bay in times of fiercest tribulation. Undimmed eyes can more easily recognize the gleam of sunshine behind the clouds. The prisoners of the outlawed Circassian insurgents admitted that, in spite of hunger, hardships, and constant danger, their captors contrived to enjoy life better than their enemies in the brandy-reeking abundance of their headquarters. The myth of the Lotos-eaters described a nation of vegetarians who passed life so pleasantly that visitors refused to leave them, and renounced their native lands. The religion of Mohammed makes abstinence from intoxicating drinks a chief duty of a true believer, and that law alone has prevented the physical degeneration of his followers. With all their mental sloth and the enervating influence of their harem life, the Turks are still the finest representatives of physical manhood. At the horse

fairs of Bucharest I saw specimens of their broad-shouldered, proud-eyed rustics, whose appearance contrasted strangely with that of the sluggish boors and furtive traffickers of the neighboring natives. After twelve hundred years of exhaustive wars, alternating with periods of luxury and tempting wealth, the descendants of the Arabian conquerors are still a hardy, long-lived race, physically far superior to the rum-drinking foreigners of their coast towns. For more than six hundred years the temperate Moriscos held their own in war and peace against all nations of Christendom. Their Semitic descent gave them no natural advantage over their Caucasian rivals ; but they entered the arena of life with clear eyes and unpalsied hearts, and in an age of universal superstition made their country a garden of science and industry. Their cities offered a refuge to the scholars and philosophers of three continents, and in hundreds of pitched battles their indomitable valor prevailed against the wine-inspired heroism of their adversaries.

Frugality has cured diseases which defied all other remedies. For thousands of reformed gluttons it has made life worth living, after the shadows of misery already threatened to darken into the gloom of approaching night. Luigi Cornaro, a Venetian nobleman of the sixteenth century, had impaired his health by gastronomic excesses till his physicians despaired of his life, when, as a last resort, he resolved to try a complete change of diet. His father, his uncles, and two of his brothers had all died before the attainment of their fiftieth year ; but

Luigi determined to try conclusions with the demon of unnaturalism, and at once reduced his daily allowance of meat to one-tenth of the usual quantity, and his wine to a stint barely sufficient to flavor a cup of Venetian cistern-water. After a month of his new regimen he regained his appetite. After ten weeks he found himself able to take long walks without fatigue, and could sleep without being awakened by nightmare horrors. At the end of a year all the symptoms of chronic indigestion had left him, and he resolved to make the plan of his cure the rule of his life. That life was prolonged to a century—forty years of racking disease followed by sixty years of unbroken health, undimmed clearness of mind, unclouded content. Habitual abstinence from unnatural food and drink saves the trials of constant self-control and the alternative pangs of repentance. "Blessed are the pure, for they can follow their inclinations with impunity."

C.—PERVERSION.

The poison-habit, as we might call the craving for the stimulus of unnatural diet, is the oldest vice, and in some of its forms has been practiced by almost every nation known to history or tradition. Thousands of years before Lot got drunk on home-made wine, the ancestors of the Brahmans fuddled with soma-juice; Zoroaster enacts laws against habitual intoxication; the art of turning grape-juice from a blessing into a curse seems to have been known to the nations of Iran, to the Parsees, and to the

first agricultural colonists of the lower Nile. Nunus, the Arabian Noah, is said to have planted vineyards on the banks of the Orontes; the worship of Bacchus was introduced into Asia Minor several centuries before the birth of Homer. The origin of the opium habit antedates the earliest records of Chinese history; for immemorial ages the Tartars have been addicted to the use of Koumis (fermented mare's milk), the Germanic nations to beer, the natives of Siam to tea and sago-wine. Intoxication and the excessive use of animal food were prevalent vices, especially in the larger cities, of pagan Greece and Rome.

Yet the ancients sinned with their eyes half open. Their recognition of dietetic abuses was expressed in the word *frugality*, which literally meant subsistence on tree-fruits—or, at least, vegetable products—in distinction from the habitual use of flesh-food. The advantages of temperate habits were never directly denied; the law of Pythagoras enjoins total abstinence from wine and flesh, and the name of a “Pythagorean” became almost a synonym of “philosopher.” In all but the most depraved centuries of Imperial Rome, wine was forbidden to children and women. The festival of the Bona Dea commemorated the fate of a Roman matron who had yielded to the temptation of intoxicating drink, and was slain by the hand of her stern husband. Lycinus recommends the plan of letting the pupils of the military training-schools witness the bestial conduct of a drunken Helot, in order to inspire them with an abhorrence of intoxication. The bias of public opin-

ion always respected the emulation of patriarchal frugality and frowned upon the excesses of licentious patricians.

But the triumph of an anti-physical religion removed those safeguards. Mistrust in the competence of our natural instincts formed the keystone of the Galilean dogma. The importance of physical welfare was systematically depreciated. The health-laws of the Mosaic code were abrogated. The messiah of Antinaturalism sanctioned the use of alcoholic drinks by his personal example—nay, by the association of that practice with the rites of a religious sacrament. The habit of purchasing mental exaltation—even of a fever-dream—at the expense of the body, agreed perfectly with the tendencies of a Nature-despising fanaticism, and during the long night of the Middle Ages monks and priests vied in an unprecedented excess of alcoholic riots. Nearly every one of the thick-sown convents from Greece to Portugal had a vineyard and a wine-cellar of its own. The monastery of Weltenburg on the upper Danube operated the largest brewery of the German empire. For centuries spiritual tyranny and spirituous license went hand in hand, and as the church increased in wealth, gluttony was added to the unnatural habits of the priesthood, and only the abject poverty of the lower classes prevented intemperance from becoming a universal vice. As it was, the followers of the Nature-despising messiah lost no opportunity to drown their better instincts in alcohol. They could plead the precedence of their moral exemplars, and vied in sowing the seeds of bodily diseases

which their system of ethics welcomed as conducive to the welfare of a world-renouncing soul.

Among the slaves of the Scotch kirk-tyrants the long-continued suppression of all healthier pastimes contributed its share to the increase of intemperance. On the day when the laboring classes found their only chance of leisure, outdoor sports were strictly prohibited. Dancing was considered a heinous, and on the Sabbath almost an unpardonable, sin. The tennis-halls were closed from Saturday night to Monday morning. Bathing was sinful. Mountain excursions, strolls along the beach, or in the open fields, were not permitted on the day of the Lord. Dietetic excesses, however, escaped control, and thus became the general outlet for the cruelly suppressed craving for a diversion from the deadly monotony of drudgery and church-penance. For "Nature will have her revenge, and when the most ordinary and harmless recreations are forbidden as sinful, is apt to seek compensation in indulgences which no moralist would be willing to condone, . . . and the strictest observance of all those minute and oppressive Sabbatarian regulations was found compatible with consecrating the day of rest to a quiet but unlimited assimilation of the liquid which inebriates but does not cheer" (*Saturday Review*, July 19, 1879). "Everyone," says Lecky, "who considers the world as it really exists, must have convinced himself that in great towns public amusements of an exciting order are absolutely necessary, and that to suppress them is simply to plunge an immense portion of the population into the lowest depths of vice."

Clerical despotism is still a potent ally of intemperance. In hundreds of British and North American cities the dearth of better pastimes drives our workmen to the pot-house. They drink to get drunk, as the only available means of escaping tedium and the consciousness of their misery. Nature craves recreation, and the suppression of that instinct has avenged itself by its perversion.

D.—PENALTIES OF NEGLECT.

Dietetic abuses have contributed more to the progress of human degeneration than all other causes taken together. Our infants are sickened with drastic drugs. The growth of young children is stunted with narcotic beverages ; the suppression of healthier pastimes drives our young men to the rum-shop ; intemperance has become the Lethe in which the victims of social abuses seek to drown their misery. The curse of the poison-habit haunts us from the cradle to the grave, and for millions of our fellow-men has made the burdens of life to outweigh its blessings. There is a doubt if the "years" of Genesis should be understood in the present meaning of the word ; but historians and biologists agree that the average longevity of our race has been enormously reduced within the last twenty centuries, and intemperance is the chief cause of that decrease. Our average stature has been reduced even below that of the ancient natives of an enervating climate, like that of the lower Nile, as proved by D'Arnaud's measurements of the Egyptian mummy-skeletons. On our own continent, outdoor life in the struggle with the

perils of the wilderness has somewhat redeemed our loss of physical manhood ; but what are the men of modern Europe compared with their iron-fisted ancestors, the athletic Greeks, the world-conquering Romans, the Scandinavian giants, the heroic Visigoths ? Like a building collapsing under the progress of a devouring fire, the structure of the human body has shrunk under the influence of the poison-habit ; and there is no doubt that the moral vigor of our race has undergone a corresponding impairment—appreciable in spite of the recent revival of intellectual activity and the constant increase of general information.

The tide is turning ; the victims of anti-physical dogmas are awakening to the significance of their delusion ; the power of public opinion has forced the dupes of the alcohol-brewing Galilean to join the crusade of the temperance movement ; diet-reform has become a chief problem of civilization ; but the upas-tree of the poison-habit is too deeply rooted to be eradicated in a single generation, and the task of redemption will be the work of centuries. As yet the probing of the wound has only revealed the appalling extent of the canker-sore. The statistics of the liquor traffic have established the fact that the value of the resources wasted on the gratification of the poison-vice far exceeds the aggregate amount of the yearly expenditure for educational, charitable, and sanitary purposes—nay, that the abolition of that traffic would save a sum sufficient for all reforms needed to turn earth into a physical and social paradise. And yet that waste expresses only the indirect

and smaller part of the damage caused by the curse of the poison-habit. The loss in health and happiness cannot be estimated in coin; but if the sum thus expended in the purchase of disease were devoted to the promotion of arson and robbery, the utmost possible extent of the consequent mischief would probably fall short of the present result. The stimulant habit in all its forms clouds the sunshine of life like an all-pervading poison-vapor. Alcohol undermines the stamina of manhood; narcotic drinks foster a complication of nervous diseases; opium and tobacco impair the vigor of the cerebral functions. The excessive use of animal food, too, avenges itself in all sorts of moral and physical disorders. It inflames passions which no prayer can quench. "Alas! what avails all theology against a diet of bull-beef?" Father Smeth wrote from the Sioux missions; and the almost exclusive use of flesh food has, indeed, afflicted our Indians with the truculence of carnivorous beasts. The same cause has produced the same effects in western Europe. The carnivorous saints of medieval Spain delighted in *matanzas* and heretic-hunts, as their carnivorous ancestors in the butcher sports of the circus, and their British contemporaries in bear-baits and Tyburn spectacles.

E.—REFORM.

The consequences of intemperance have at all times provoked protests against the more ruinous forms of the poison-habit, but the advance from special to general principles is often amazingly slow; and even now the cause of temperance is hampered by the

shortsightedness of reformers who hope to eradicate the Upas-tree by clipping and hacking its more prominent branches. They would limit prohibition to the more deadly stimulants, not dreaming that the fatal habit is sure to reproduce its fruit from the smallest germs; that the poison-vice, in fact, is infallibly progressive, ever tending to goad the morbid craving of the toper to stronger and stronger poisons or to a constant increase in the quantity of the wonted stimulant: from cider to brandy, from laudanum to morphine, from tonic bitters to rum, from a glass of wine to a dozen bottles, from beer and tobacco to the vilest tipples of the dram-shop. "*Principiis obsta*" (Resist the beginnings) was a Latin maxim of deep significance. The cumulative tendency of the stimulant vice may be resisted, but only by constant vigilance, constant self-denial, constant struggles with the revivals of a morbid appetite, all of which might be saved by the total renunciation of all abnormal stimulants whatever, for only in that sense is it true that "abstinence is easier than temperance."

We must accustom our boys to avoid the poison-vice as a loathsome disease, rather than as a forbidden luxury which could ever be indulged without paying the penalty of Nature in a distressing reaction, far outweighing the pleasures of the morbid and momentary exaltation. We must teach them that the artifice by which the toper hopes to cheat Nature out of an access of abnormal enjoyment is under all circumstances a losing game, which at last fails to produce, even for the moment of the fever-stimulus, a

glimpse of happiness at all comparable to the unclouded sunshine of temperance.

But before we can hope to redeem the victims of the poison-vender, we must learn to make virtue more attractive than vice. We must counteract the attractions of the rum-shop by inviting reforming toppers, not to the whining conventicles of a Sabbath-school, but to temperance gardens, resounding with music (dance music, if "sacred concerts" should pall) and the jubilee of romping children, and shortening summer days with free museums, picture galleries, swings, ball grounds, and foot-race tracks. The gods of the future will contrive to outbid the devil.

It would be unfair, though, to depreciate the services of the Christian ministers who in a choice between dogma and reform have bravely sided with Nature, and, defying the wrath both of spiritual and spirituous poison-mongers, of rum-sellers and heretic-hunters, are trying their utmost to undo the mischief of their antinatural creed, by frankly admitting that a man *can* be defiled by "things that enter his mouth," and that the sacrament of eucharistic alcohol should be abandoned to the rites of devil-worshippers.

But the religion which pretends to inculcate a peace-making spirit of meekness has been strangely remiss in opposing the excessive use of a diet which is clearly incompatible with the promotion of that virtue. In Christians, as in Turks, Tartars, and North American Redskins, a chiefly carnivorous diet engenders the instincts of carnivorous beasts, and a Peace Congress celebrating its banquets with sixteen courses of flesh food might as well treat a vigilance

committee to sixteen courses of opium. "Frugality" should again be promoted in the ancient sense of the word; in a community of reformants temperance and vegetarianism should go hand in hand. Or rather, the word "temperance" should be used in the extended sense that would make it a synonym of *Abstinence from all kinds of unnatural food and drink*; and Dr. Schrod's rule should become the canon of every dietetic reform league. "Avoid," he says, "all drinks and stimulants repulsive to the palate of an unseduced child, but also all comestibles that need artificial preparation to make them palatable." The first part of that rule would exclude opium, tobacco, alcoholic beverages, tea, coffee, absinthe, fetid cheese, and caustic spices. The second would abolish many kinds of animal food, but sanction milk, butter, eggs, honey, and other "semi-animal" substances, condemned by the extreme school of vegetarians. "From the *egg* to the *apple*," is an old Latin phrase which proves that the frugality of the ancient Romans never went to such extremes. Milk, eggs, and vegetable fats, in their combination with farinaceous dishes, might amply replace the flesh food of the northern nations, and, considering the infinite variety of fruits and vegetables known to modern horticulture, there seems no reason why a vegetarian diet should necessarily be a monotonous one. The Religion of Nature will require the renunciation of several deep-rooted prejudices, but its path of salvation will in no sense be a path of thorns.

CHAPTER V.

SKILL.

A.—LESSONS OF INSTINCT.

The organic faculties of each species of animals are marvelously adapted to its peculiar mode of life, but only in the lower creatures the skilful exercise of those faculties appears to be an inborn gift. The young bee builds its first hexagon with mathematical precision. The young ant needs no instructor to aid her choice of proper building-material, of proper food to be stored for winter use or distributed in the nurseries of the larvæ. The young butterfly, an hour after issuing from the shell of the chrysalis, can use its wings as well as at the end of the summer, and displays the same skill in steering its way through the maze of a tangled forest.

Young birds, on the other hand, have to acquire such accomplishments by long practice. Instead of driving them back to their nests, their parents encourage their attempts at longer and longer flights, and seem to know that occasional mishaps will prove a useful lesson for future emergencies. The mother fox carries half-crippled game to her burrow and sets her cubs a-scampering in pursuit, allowing the best runner to monopolize the tidbits. Young kittens practice mouse-catching by playing with balls; puppies run after grasshoppers, young squirrels play at nest-building by gathering handfuls of leaves and moss. A British naturalist, who had domesticated a young beaver, one day caught his pet building a dam across the floor of his study. The little engineer

had dragged up a cartload of books, papers, sticks of wood, etc., and piled them up to best advantage, placing the heavier volumes in the bottom stratum and the lighter ones higher up, and filling out the interspaces with letters and journals. Every now and then he would "stand off" to scrutinize the solidity of the structure and return to mend a misarrangement here and there.

Children manifest early symptoms of a similar instinct. Infants of two or three years can be seen squatting in the sand, excavating tunnels, or building prairie-dog towns. Young Indians insist on the privilege of breaking colts; the youngsters of the Bermuda Islanders straddle a plank and paddle around with a piece of driftwood, if their parents are too poor to afford them a canoe of their own. To a normal American boy a tool-box is a more welcome present than a velvet copy of Doré's Illustrated Bible. Swiss peasant lads practice sharp-shooting with self-constructed cross-bows. The old English law which required the son of a yeoman to practice archery for three hours a day was probably the most popular statute of the British code. On new railroads, bridges, etc., artisans, plying their trade in the open air, are generally surrounded by crowds of young rustics, who forego the pleasures of nutting and nest-hunting for the sake of watching the manipulations of a new handicraft. Even in after years the instinct of constructiveness frequently breaks the shackles of etiquette, and princes and prelates have defied the gossip of their flunkies by getting a set of tools and passing whole days in the retirement of an

amateur workshop. The emperor Henry I. invented a number of ingenious hunting-nets and bird-traps. Mohammed II., the conqueror of Constantinople, forged his own chain-armor. Charles V., the arbiter of Europe, preferred watchmaking to every other pastime. Cardinal de Retz delighted in the construction of automats. Peter the Great was the best ship-carpenter of his empire.

B.—REWARDS OF CONFORMITY.

The English word *king*, like Danish *kong* and German *koenig*, are derived from *koennen* (practical knowledge), and the first ruler was the most skilful, as likely as the strongest, man of his tribe. Skill, whether in the sense of bodily agility or of mechanical cleverness, established the superiority of man over his fellow-creatures, and is still in many respects a test of precedence between man and man. Supreme physical dexterity is always at a premium, in peace as in war, in the sports of princes, in the pastimes of pleasure-seekers, in the adventures of travelers, in moments of danger, in camps, in the wilderness and on the sea, as well as in smithies and workshops. Conscious skill and agility form the basis of a kind of self-reliance which wealth can only counterfeit. In a cosmopolitan sea-port town of western Europe I once overheard a controversy on the comparative value of protective weapons. Revolvers, stiletos, air guns, slung-shots, and bowie knives found clever advocates, but all arguments yielded to the remark of an old sea-captain, who had faced danger in four different continents. "There's a use for all that, no

doubt," said he, "but, I tell you, mynheers, in a close row the best thing to rely upon is a pair of quick fists." For the efficacy, even of the best weapons, depends to a large degree on the expertness of the handler, the panoply of a weakling being as unprofitable as the library of an idiot. "Presence of mind" is often only the outcome of such expertness, and in sudden emergencies theories are shamed by the prompt expedients of a practical man. In war the issue of a doubtful campaign has more than once been decided by the superior *constructiveness* of an army that could bridge a river while their opponents waited for the subsiding of a flood. The conquest of Canada was achieved by the skill of a British soldier who devised a plan for hauling cannon to the top of a steep plateau. The fate of the Byzantine empire was decided by the mechanical expedient of a Turkish engineer who contrived a tramway of rollers and greased planks, as an overland road for a fleet of war ships. By the invention of the chain grappling-hook Duilius transferred the empire of the Mediterranean from Carthage to Rome.

Even for the sake of its hygienic influence the development of mechanical skill deserves more general encouragement. Crank-work gymnastics are apt to pall, but in pursuit of a favorite handicraft even an invalid can beguile himself into a good deal of health-giving exercise, and, besides, the versatile development of the muscular system reacts on the functions of the vital organs, and thus explains the robust health of active mechanics often laboring under the disadvantage of indoor confinement. The poet

Goethe, whose intuitions of practical philosophy rival those of Bacon and Franklin, records the opinion that every brain-worker should have some mechanical by-trade in order to obviate one-sidedness, and mental as well as physical debility. Every handicraft reveals by-laws of Nature which no cyclopedia can teach an inquirer; manual labor is a school of practical wisdom, and sound "common sense," as the English language happily expresses the sum of that wisdom, is a prerogative of farmers and mechanics far, far oftener than of speculative philosophers.

Nor are such benefits limited to emergencies from which wealth could dispense its possessor. An amateur handicraft is the best safeguard against the chief bane of wealth: *ennui*, with its temptations to folly and vice. Nabobs can do worse than imitate the example of Carlo Boromeo, who spent every leisure hour of his philanthropic life in practical landscape gardening, and turned a large and once barren lake-island into the loveliest paradise of southern Europe. "*Heroum filii noxae*," "the sons of the great are apt to be nuisances," would be less true if Goethe's advice were heeded by our fashionable educators, and the benefits of his plan would extend to emergencies for which fashionable accomplishments afford only a dubious safeguard. "A mechanical trade," says Jean Jacques Rousseau, "is the best basis of safety against the caprices of fortune. Classical scholarship may go begging, where technical skill finds its immediate reward. A distressed savant may recover his loss in the course of years; a skilful mechanic need only enter the next workshop and show

a sample of his handiwork. 'Well, let's see you try,' the reply will be; 'step this way and pitch in.'"

Thus, too, gymnastic agility is the best safeguard against numberless perils. A mother who hopes to protect her boy by keeping him at home and guarding him from the rough sports of his playmates, forgets that her apron-strings cannot guide him through the perils of after years; and a better plan was that of Cato, the statesman, warrior, and philosopher, who, in the midst of his manifold duties, found time to instruct his young sons in leaping ditches, and swimming rapid rivers, in order to "teach them to overcome danger that could not be permanently avoided."

C.—PERVERSION.

The absurd contempt of mechanical accomplishments is due partly to the direct influence of anti-physical dogmas, partly to the indirect tendency of that *caste spirit* which has for ages fostered the antagonism of wealth and labor. The opulent Brahmins of ancient Hindostan thought themselves so immeasurably superior to the children of toil that a *Sudra* was not permitted to approach a priest without ample precautions against the defilement of the worshipful entity. The temples of high-caste devotees were closed against low-caste believers. The very breath of a *Sudra* was supposed to pollute articles of food to such an extent that a Brahman had always to take his meals alone.

The secret of such prejudices was probably the supposed antagonism of body and soul and the imagined necessity of emphasizing that contrast by

constant insults to the representatives of physical interests and occupations. For in Europe, too, the propagation of an anti-physical creed went hand in hand with the systematic depreciation of secular work, excepting, perhaps, the trade of professional manslaughter, the military caste, which here, as in India, found always means to enforce respect by methods of their own. During the most orthodox centuries of the Middle Ages industrial burghers were valued only as tax-payers; peasants were treated little better than beasts of burden—in many respects decidedly worse, for after drudging all day for an inexorable master, the serf had often to work by moonlight, in order to get a little bread for himself and his family. The proposition to join in any manual occupation (the handling of a whip, perhaps, excepted) would have been resented as a gross insult by every little baron or priest of Christian Europe. Paul Courier describes the indignation of a French nobleman who caught a tutor instructing his boys in botany and the secret of improving trees by grafting: "Going to make a clown of him? You had better get an assistant-teacher with a manure cart." The manual-labor dread of several medieval princes went to the length of employing special chamberlains for every detail of their toilet: a chief and assistant shirt-warmer, a wig-adjuster, a hand-washer, a foot-bather, a foot-dryer. German barons thought mechanical labor an incomparable disgrace—more shameful, in fact, than crime—for the same *Ritter* who would have starved rather than put his hand to a plow, had no hesitation in eking out an income by

highway robbery. The princes of the church thought it below their dignity to walk afoot, and kept sedan-bearers to transport them to church and back. They kept writing and reading clerks, and now and then fought a duel by proxy, or sent a vicar to lay the corner-stone of a new court-house, in order to convey the impression that their spiritual duties left them no time for secular concerns.

That sort of *other-worldliness* still seems to bias our plans of education. Colleges that would fear to lose prestige by devoting a few minutes a week to technical work or horticulture, surrender dozens of hours to the bullying propaganda of a clerical miracle-monger. Mechanical mastership (after all, the basis of all science) is denied a place among the honorable "faculties" of our high-schools. Fashionable parents would be shocked at the vulgar taste of a boy who should visit joiner-shops and smithies, instead of following his aristocratic friends to the club-house. They would bewail the profanation of his social rank, if he should accept an invitation to impart his skill to the pupils of a mechanical training-school; but would connive at the mental prostitution of a young sneak who should try to reëstablish a sanctimonious reputation by volunteering his assistance to the managers of a mythology-school.

D.—PENALTIES OF NEGLECT.

Neglected development, either of physical or mental faculties, avenges itself in *ennui*, modified, for the benefit of the poor, by the less monotonous

afflictions of care. There is no doubt that the feeling of emptiness that seeks refuge in the fever of passion or intoxication, is a wholly abnormal condition, as unknown to the children of the wilderness, who never feel the craving of unemployed faculties, as to the truly civilized man, who finds means to satisfy that craving. Unemployed muscles, like idle talents, rebel against continued neglect and goad the sluggard to seek relief in the morbid excitement of vice, and the father who thinks it a waste of money to invest a dollar in a tool-box may have to spend hundreds for the settlement of rum bills and gambling debts.

Both the effect and the cause of such excesses were rather rare in the prime of the North American republic, when nearly every colonist was a farmer, and every farm a *polytechnicum* of home-taught trades; but European luxuries introduced European habits, and our cities now abound with plutocrats who are ashamed of the toil by which their forefathers laid the foundation of their wealth. Our cities have bred the vices faster than the refinements of wealth, and have become acquainted with *ennui*—

We lack the word but have the thing;

and thousands who would fail to find relief on the classical hunting-grounds of Peter Bayle might imitate his landlord, who practiced sharp-shooting with a medieval hunting-bow till he could challenge the best pistol shots of the neighboring garrison. In a choice of evils the most puerile game of skill is, indeed, clearly preferable to games of chance; but

to that last resort of inanity the traditional aversion to manual employments has actually driven thousands of city idlers. Yet our American towns have never sunk to the abject effeminacy of European cities, where physical apathy has become a test of good breeding and a taste for mechanical accomplishments a stigma of eccentricity, and where, consequently, social prestige has to be purchased at the price of practical helplessness, of dependence in all mechanical questions of life on the aid and the judgment of hirelings.

Life-endangering accident may now and then illustrate the disadvantages of physical incapacity; a drowning bather may be inclined to admit that the saving influence of a swimming-school might compare favorably with that of the baptismal miracle tank; but the survivors will persist in relying on the vicarious omnipotence of coin, ignoring the clearest illustrations of the truth that physical incapacity avenges itself in every waking hour, even of the wealthiest weakling, while the guardian-spirit of Skill accompanies its wards from the workshop to the playground and follows them over mountains and seas.

E.—REFORM.

The growing impatience with the dead-language system of our monkish school-plan will soon lead to a radical reform of college education, and a fair portion of the time gained should be devoted to the culture of mechanical arts. For boys in their teens the "instinct of constructiveness" would still prove to retain enough of its native energy to make the change

a decidedly popular one, as demonstrated by the success of the mechanical training schools that have attracted many pupils who have to find the requisite leisure by stinting themselves in their recreations. "Applied gymnastics" (riding, swimming, etc.) would be still more popular, and greatly lessen the yearly list of accidents from the neglect of such training.

The bias of fashion would soon be modified by the precedence of its leaders, as in Prussia, where the royal family set a good example by educating their princes (in addition to the inevitable military training) in the by-trade of some mechanical accomplishment (carpentry, sculpture, bookbinding, etc.), the choice of handicraft being optional with the pupil. No model residence should be deemed complete without a polytechnic workshop, furnished with a panoply of apparatus for the practice of all sorts of amateur chemical and mechanical pursuits—a plan by which the Hungarian statesman-author, Maurus Jockar, has banished the specter of *ennui* from his hospitable country seat. His private hobby is Black Art, as he calls his experiments in recondite chemistry, but any one of his guests is welcome to try his hand at wood-carving, glass-painting, metallurgy, or any of the more primitive crafts, for which the laboratory furnishes an abundance of apparatus. Private taste might, of course, modify the details of that plan, and even without regard to eventual results, its proximate benefits if once known would alone insure its general adoption in the homes of the *ennui*-stricken classes. The educational advantages

of mechanical training, though, can, indeed, hardly be overrated. A scholar with nerveless arms and undextrous hands is as far from being a complete man as a nimble savage with an undeveloped brain.

II.—MENTAL MAXIMS.

CHAPTER VI.

KNOWLEDGE.

A.—LESSONS OF INSTINCT.

In the arena of life animal instinct triumphs over the elemental forces of Nature, as human intelligence triumphs over instinct, and the secret of that superiority is knowledge. Skill is well-directed force. Prudence is well-applied reason. The efficiency of that directing faculty depends on experience, as we call the accumulation of recollected facts. Knowledge is stored light, as helpful in the narrowest as in the widest sphere of conscious activity, and the instinctive appreciation of that advantage manifests itself in the lowest species of vertebrate animals, nay, perhaps even in the winged insects that swarm in from near and far to explore the mystery of a flickering torch. Curiosity, rather than the supposed love of rhythm, tempts the serpent to leave its den at the sound of the conjurer's flute. Dolphins are thus attracted by the din of a kettledrum, river-fish by the glare of a moving light. Where deer abound, a pitchwood fire, kindled in a moonless night, is sure to allure them from all parts of the forest. Antelope hunters can entice their game within rifle-shot by

fastening a red kerchief to a bush and letting it flutter in the breeze. When the first telegraph lines crossed the plateau of the Rocky Mountains, herds of bighorn sheep were often seen trotting along the singing wires as if anxious to ascertain the meaning of the curious innovation. Every abnormal change in the features of a primitive landscape—the erection of a lookout-tower, a clearing in the midst of a primeval forest—attracts swarms of inquisitive birds, even crows and shy hawks, who seem to recognize the advantage of reconnoitering the topography of their hunting-grounds. In some of the higher animals inquisitiveness becomes too marked to mistake its motive, as when a troop of colts gathers about a new dog, or a pet monkey pokes his head into a cellar-hole, and wears out his finger-nails to ascertain the contents of a brass rattle.

For the intelligence of children, too, inquisitiveness is a pretty sure test. Infants of ten months may be seen turning their eyes toward a new piece of furniture in their nursery. Kindergarten pets of three years have been known to pick up a gilded pebble from the gravel road and call their teacher's attention to the color of the abnormal specimen. With a little encouragement that faculty of observation may develop surprising results. The wife of a Mexican missionary of my acquaintance, who had taken charge of an Indian orphan boy, and made a point of answering every pertinent question of the bright-eyed youngster, was one day surprised to hear him usher in a stranger and invite him to a seat in the parlor. "How could you know it was not a tramp?" she asked her little

chamberlain after the visitor had left. "Oh, I could tell by his clean finger-nails," said Master Five-years, "and also by his straight shoes. Tramps always get their heels crooked!"

The shrewd remarks of boy naturalists and girl satirists often almost confirm the opinion of Goethe that every child has the innate gifts of genius, and that subsequent differences are only the result of more or less propitious educational influences. And in spite of most discouraging circumstances, the love of knowledge sometimes revives in after years with the energy almost of a passionate instinct. On the veranda of a new hotel in a railroad town of southern Texas, I once noticed the expression of rapt interest on the face of a young hunter, a lad of eighteen or nineteen, who here for the first time came in contact with the representatives of a higher civilization and with breathless attention drank in the conversation of two far-traveled strangers. "If they would hire me for a *dog-robber* (a low menial), I would do it for a dime a day," he muttered, "just for the chance to hear them talk."

"But if they should take you to some smoky, crowded, big city?"

"I don't care," said he, with an oath, "I would let them lock me up in a jail, if I could get an education like theirs."

It would, indeed, be a mistake to suppose that the thirst for mental development is the exclusive product of advanced culture. In the thinly settled highlands of our western territories, miners and herders have been known to travel ten miles a day

over rough mountain roads to get the rudiments of a school education. Missionaries who have mastered the language of a barbarous tribe have more than once been followed by converts whom the charm of general knowledge (far more than any special theological motive) impelled to forsake the home of their fathers and follow the white stranger to the land of his omniscient countrymen.

B.—REWARDS OF CONFORMITY.

Knowledge is power, even in the contests of brutes. Superior topographical knowledge enables the chasing wolf to intercept the flight of his game; a well-chosen ambush makes the tiger the master of his would-be slayer. Familiarity with the habits of enemies and rivals decides success in the struggle for existence.

The advantage of superior knowledge is not limited to the prestige of superlative scholarship, but asserts itself in the chances of every competitive pursuit, so infallibly, indeed, as to justify Diderot's paradox that there is no need of any such thing as love of science for its own sake, since all knowledge repays its acquisition by collateral benefits. A farmer's boy studying statute-law, a lawyer collecting market reports, will sooner or later find a chance to profit by their study. The infinite interaction of human affairs connects the interests of all branches of human knowledge, and makes the humblest handicraft amenable to scientific improvement. Knowledge has never hindered the successful pursuit of any manual vocation. Fifty years ago several states of the

American Union made it a penal offense to teach a slave reading and writing; and if the planter valued his laborers in proportion to their canine submissiveness, he was perhaps right that "education spoils a nigger." It qualified his servility, and by making him a better man, made him perhaps a less available dog. But with that single exception, ignorance is a disadvantage, and knowledge an advantage, both to its possessor and his employers. In the solitudes of the Australian bush-land, Frederick Jerstaecker found a herdsman reading Aristophanes in the original. Neither the sheep nor their owners were any the worse for that incidental accomplishment of the poor shepherd, who found his study a sufficient source of pastime, while his comrades were apt to drown their *ennui* in bad rum. James Cook, the greatest of modern maritime discoverers, served his apprenticeship on board of a coal-barge and employed his leisure in studying works on geography and general history. The knowledge thus acquired might seem of no direct advantage, but three years after, on board of the Eagle frigate, the erudition of the brawny young sailor soon attracted the attention of two intelligent officers whose recommendations proved the stepping-stones of his successful career. Mohammed Baber Khan, the emperor of the Mogul empire, owed his triumphs to his topographical studies of a region which afterward became the battleground of his great campaigns. Mohammed the Prophet gained the confidence of his first employer by his familiarity with the commercial customs of neighboring nations. Superior knowledge

compels even an unwilling recognition of its prestige. In the Middle Ages, when Moslems and Trinitarians were at daggers drawn, Christian kings sent respectful embassies to solicit the professional advice of Ibn Rhus ("Averroes"), the Moorish physician. During the progress of the life-and-death struggle of France and Great Britain, the discoveries of Sir Humphrey Davy impelled the Academie Française to send their chief prize to England. The benefits of great inventions are too international to leave room for that envy that pursues the glory of military heroes, and the triumphs of science have often united nations whom a unity of religion had failed to reconcile.

C.—PERVERSION.

There is a tradition that a year before the conversion of Constantine the son of the prophetess Sospitira was praying in the temple of Serapis, when the spirit of his mother came over him and the veil of the future was withdrawn. "Woe to our children!" he exclaimed, when he awakened from his trance, "I see a cloud approaching, a great darkness is going to spread over the face of the world." That darkness proved a thirteen hundred years' eclipse of common sense and reason. There is a doubt if the total destruction of all cities of the civilized world could have struck a more cruel blow to Science than the dogma of salvation by faith and abstinence from the pursuit of free inquiry. The ethics of the world-renouncing fanatic condemned the love of secular knowledge as they condemned the love of health and the pursuit of physical prosperity, and the children

of the next fifty generations were systematically trained to despise the highest attribute of the human spirit. Spiritual poverty became a test of moral worth; philosophers and free inquirers were banished, while mental castrates were fattened at the expense of toiling rustics and mechanics; science was dreaded as an ally of skepticism, if not of the arch-fiend in person; the suspicion of sorcery attached to the cultivation of almost any intellectual pursuit, and the Emperor Justinian actually passed a law for the "suppression of mathematicians."

When the tyranny of the church reached the zenith of its power, natural science became almost a tradition of the past. The pedants of the convent schools divided their time between the forgery of miracle legends and the elaboration of insane dogmas. The most extravagant absurdities were propagated under the name of historical records; medleys of nursery-tales and ghost-stories which the poorest village school-teacher of pagan Rome would have rejected with disgust were gravely discussed by so-called scholars. Buckle, in his "History of Civilization," quotes samples of such chronicles which might be mistaken for products of satire, if abundant evidence of contemporary writers did not prove them to have been the current staple of medieval science.

When the gloom of the dreadful night was broken by the first gleam of modern science, every torch-bearer was persecuted as an incendiary. Astronomers were forced to recant their heresies on their bended knees. Philosophers were caged like wild beasts. Religious skeptics were burnt at the stake, as

enemies of God and the human race. It was, indeed, almost impossible to enunciate any scientific axiom that did not conflict with the dogmas of the revelation-mongers who had for centuries subordinated the evidence of their own senses to the rant of epileptic monks and maniacs. And when the sun of Reason rose visibly above the horizon of the intellectual world, its rays struggled distorted through the dense mist of superstition which continued to brood over the face of the earth, and was only partially dispersed even by the storms of the Protestant revolt.

The light of modern science has brought its blessings only to the habitants of the social highlands; the valley dwellers still grope their way through the gloom of inveterate superstitions and prejudices, and centuries may pass before the world has entirely emerged from the shadow of the life-blighting cloud which the son of Sospitra recognized in the rise of the Galilean delusion.

D.—PENALTIES OF NEGLECT.

Of all the sins of Antinaturalism, the suppression of human reason has brought down the curse of the direst retribution. It is the unpardonable sin against the Holy Spirit. The actual extinction of their local sunshine could hardly have entailed greater misery upon the slaves of the Christian church. The victims of a permanent Egyptian darkness might have taken refuge in the Goshen of their neighbors, in the sunny garden-homes of the Parsees and Spanish Moriscos, but the jealousy of the clerical tyrants closed every

gate of escape, and for thirteen centuries the nations of Christian Europe suffered all the horrors of enforced ignorance and superstition. The history of that dismal night is, indeed, the darkest page in the records of the human race, and its horrors bind the duties of every sane survivor to a war of extermination upon the dogmas of the insane fanatic whose priests turned the paradise of southern Europe into a hell of misery and barbarism.

The battle against the demon of darkness became a struggle for existence, in which the powers of Nature at last prevailed, but for millions of our fellow-men the day of deliverance has dawned too late; spring-time and morning returned in vain for many a once fertile land where the soil itself had lost its reproductive power, where the outrages of Antinaturalism had turned gardens into deserts and freemen into callous slaves. The storm that awakened the nations of northern Europe from the dreams of their poison-fever could not break the spell of a deeper slumber, and the moral desert of the Mediterranean coast-lands remains to warn the nations of the future, as the bleaching bones of a perished caravan remain to warn the traveler from the track of the simoom.

The religion of Mohammed, with its health-laws and encouragements to martial prowess, has produced no ruinous results of physical degeneration, but the entire neglect of mental culture has not failed to avenge itself in the loss of national prestige. For after the northern nations of Christendom had broken the yoke of their spiritual tyrants, the chil-

dren of Islam remained faithful to the task-masters of their less grievous bondage, but also to its total indifference to secular science, and from that day the crescent of the prophet became a waning moon.

E.—REFORM.

The experience of the Middle Ages has made the separation of church and state the watchword of all true Liberals. But the divorce of church and *school* is a duty of hardly less urgent importance. While many of our best Freethinkers waste their time in hair-splitting metaphysics, Catholic and Protestant Jesuits coöperate for a purpose which they have shrewdly recognized as the main hope of obscurantism: The perversion of primary education by its re-subjection to the control of the clergy. The definite defeat of those intrigues should be considered the only permanent guarantee against the revival of spiritual feudalism. A perhaps less imminent, but hardly less serious, danger to the cause of Science is the stealthy revival of mysticism. Under all sorts of nomenclatural modifications, the specter-creed of the ancient Gnostics is again rearing its head, and menacing reason by an appeal to the hysterical and sensational proclivities of ignorance.

In the third place, there is no doubt that under the present circumstances of educational limitations the adoption of female suffrage would prove a death-blow to intellectual progress and re-doom mankind to the tutelage of a clerical Inquisition; but rather than perpetuate a twofold system of oppression, we should complete the work of emancipation by ad-

mitting our sisters to all available social and educational advantages, as well as to the privilege of the polls. From the suffrage of educated women we have nothing to fear and much to hope.

It has long been a mooted question if the progress of knowledge can be promoted by arbitrary encouragement, such as prize offers and sinecures, but the preponderance of logic seems on the side of those who hold that science should be left to its normal rewards, and that the proper sphere of legislation does not extend beyond the duty of securing the full benefit of those rewards by the removal of absurd disabilities and unfair discriminations in support of worm-eaten dogmas. Reason may be safely left to fight its own battle, if the arms of Un-reason cease to be strengthened by statutes which enable every village ghost-monger to silence the exponents of science by an appeal to medieval heretic-laws.

CHAPTER VII.

INDEPENDENCE.

A.—LESSONS OF INSTINCT.

If the scale of precedence in the mental development of our fellow-creatures can be determined by any single test, that test is the instinctive love of Independence. Many of the lower animals may surprise us by constructive achievements that rival the products of human science, but their instinct of freedom is quite imperfectly developed. The caterpillar

of the silk-moth will spin its satin winter-gown in a box full of mulberry leaves as skilfully as in the freedom of the tropical forests. In the hive of their captor a swarm of wild bees will continue to build hexagons and store up honey as diligently as in the rocks or hollow trees of the wilderness. Captive river-fish will eat and pair a day after their transfer to a fish-pond. Birds, on the other hand, mourn their lost liberty for weeks. During the first half-month of its captivity, a caged hawk rarely accepts any food; sea-birds and eagles starve with a persistence as if they were thus trying to end an affliction from which they see no other way of escape. Wild cows can be domesticated in a month; wild elephants hardly in a year. Several species of the larger *carnivora* can be trained only if caught in their cub-hood, as in after years they become almost wholly untamable. The lower varieties of *quadrumana*, the Brazilian capuchin monkeys and East Indian macaques, seem almost to invite capture by the frequency of their visits to the neighborhood of human dwellings, while the apes proper are, without any exception, the shyest creatures of the virgin woods. The gorilla is so rarely seen in the vicinity of human settlements that its very existence was long considered doubtful. Sir Stamford Raffles asserts that at the distant sound of an ax the orang of Sumatra at once abandons its favorite haunts in the coast jungles. On the west coast of Borneo a large orang was once surprised by the crew of an English trading-vessel, but fought with a desperation that obliged its would-be captors to riddle it with rifle-balls, though they knew that a

living specimen of that size would be worth its weight in silver.

That same resolution in defense of their liberties has always distinguished the nobler from the baser tribes of the human race. The natives of the Gambia Valley have no hesitation in selling their relatives to the Portuguese slave-traders, while the liberation of a single countryman (whom the enemy had determined to hold as a hostage) impelled the Circassian highlanders to risk their lives in a series of desperate assaults upon the ramparts of a Russian frontier post. The hope of covering the retreat of their fleeing wives and children inspired the heroes of Thermopylæ to make a stand against six-thousand-fold odds. The crimps of the Christian church-despots found no difficulty in foisting their yoke upon the former vassals of the Roman empire, but when they attempted to cross the border of the Saxon *Landmark*, the kidnappers were slain like rabid wolves; and when the neighboring ruffian-counts, and at last Charlemagne in person, marched to the support of the clerical slave-hunters, they met with a resistance the record of which will forever remain the proudest page in the chronicle of the Germanic races. Cornfields were burnt, villages were leveled with the ground; for hundreds of miles the means of human subsistence were utterly destroyed; but the council of the Saxon chieftains refused to submit, and when the homes of their forefathers were devastated, they carried their children to the inaccessible wilds of the Hartz highlands, where they grimly welcomed the aid of the winter snows, and defied frost

and starvation, rather than *crawl to cross* (*zu kreuze kriechen*), as their vernacular stigmatized the cowardice of their crucifix-kissing neighbors. And when the Frankish autocrat had shackled their land with a chain of forts, they thrice rebelled with persistent disregard of consequences; nay, after the loss of the last murderous battle, the prisoners of war refused to accept the ultimatum of the conqueror, and rather than *crawl to cross* four thousand of their captive noblemen mounted the scaffold of the executioner on the market-square of Quedlinburg. The bodies of the heroes were thrown to the birds of the wilderness; but their deathless spirits revived in the philippics of Martin Luther and the battle-shout of Luetzen and Oudenarde, and will yet ride the storm destined to hurl the last cross from the temples of the Germanic nations.

B.—REWARDS OF CONFORMITY.

Since the dawn of history the lands of freedom have produced fruits and flowers that refused to thrive on any other soil. For several centuries civilization was confined to a small country of republics: Attic and Theban Greece. "Study the wonders of that age," says Byron to his friend Trelawney, "and compare them with the best ever done under masters." Switzerland, in spite of its rocky soil, has for centuries been the happiest, as well as the freest, country of Europe. The prosperity of the United States of America, since the establishment of their independence, stands unparalleled in the history of the last eighteen hundred years; and, moreover, the degree of that

prosperity has been locally proportioned to the degree of social freedom, and has begun to become general only since the general abolition of slavery. Freedom blesses the poorest soil, as despotism blights the most fertile, and it is only an apparent exception from that rule that Italy continued to flourish during the first two centuries of the empire. The change in the form of government was at first nominal, rather than real, and under the rule of Augustus, Trajan, Hadrian, and the Antonines, Rome enjoyed more real liberty than many a so-called republic of modern times. When despotism became a systematic and chronic actuality, the sun of fortune was soon eclipsed, and the social climate became as unfavorable to art and literature as to valor and patriotism.

Personal independence is a not less essential condition of individual happiness. Bondage in any form, and of silken or gilded, as well as of iron, fetters, is incompatible with the development of the highest mental and moral faculties. The genius of Poland and modern Italy has produced its best fruit in exile. The progress of modern civilization dates only from the time when knowledge once more flourished in a *Republic of Letters*; and for a thousand years the monastery system of medieval literature produced hardly a single work of genius. Within the period of the last three or four generations the sun of freedom has ripened better and more abundant fruit in any single decade than the dungeon-air of despotism during a series of centuries. All foreign travelers agree in admiring (or condemn-

ing) the early mental development of American children, who have a chance to exercise their intellectual faculties in an area untrammelled by the barriers of caste divisions and social restraints. They may yield to the pupils of the best European colleges in special branches of scholarship, but in common sense, general intelligence, general information, in self-respect, in practical versatility and self-dependence, an American boy of twelve is, as a rule, more than a match for a continental-European boy of sixteen; and the same holds good of the average intelligence and self-dependence of our country population. With the rarest exceptions the political economists of our Southern states agree that the agricultural negro as a freeman is a more valuable laborer than as a slave, and that emancipation, in the long run, has benefited the planter as well as his serf. I venture even to add the verdict of Professor Hagenbeck, the founder of the great zoölogical supply depot, that menagerie-trainers of the least despotic methods are the most successful. Turf-men know that the best horses do not come from the unequaled perennial pastures of the lower Danube, but from England and Araby, where pet colts enjoy almost the freedom of a pet child.

C.—PERVERSION.

The ethics of Anti-naturalism include the Buddhist doctrine of self-abasement, as an indispensable condition of salvation. That salvation meant extinction, the utter renunciation of earthly hopes and desires, the mortification of all natural instincts, in-

cluding the instinct of freedom. Abject submission to injustice, the subordination of reason to dogma, the sinfulness of rebellion against the "powers that be," were inculcated with a zeal that made the church an invaluable ally of despotism. For centuries a scepter combining the form of a cross and a bludgeon was the significant emblem of tyranny. With the aid, nay, in the name, of the Christian hierarchy, the despots of the Middle Ages elaborated a system of subordination of personal freedom to autocratic caprices, which, by comparison, makes the tyranny of the Cæsars a model of liberalism. Every important function of social and domestic life was subjected to the control of arbitrary functionaries, armed with irresponsible power or with a system of oppressive penal by-laws. Censors suppressed every symptom of visible or audible protest. Every school was a prison, every judgment-seat a star-chamber. Peasants and mechanics had no voice in the councils of their rulers. The merit of official employees was measured by the degree of their flunkeyism. But the *ne-plus-ultras* of physical and moral despotism were combined in the slavery of the monastic convents. The attempt of reviving the outrages which abbots for centuries practiced on the unfortunates whom a rash vow (or often the mandate of a bigoted parent) had submitted to their power, would certainly expose the manager of a modern convent to the risk of being mobbed and torn limb from limb. Novices were subjected to all sorts of wanton tortures and arbitrary deprivation of his scant privileges; they were compelled to perform shameful and ridic-

ulous acts of self-abasement, all merely to "break their wordly spirit," *i. e.*, crush out the last vestige of self-respect and life-love, in order to prepare them for the consolations of other-worldliness. The moral emasculation of the human race seems, indeed, to have been the main purpose of the educational policy which the priests of the Nature-hating Galilean pursued wherever the union of Church and State put children and devotees at the mercy of their dogmatists.

D.—PENALTIES OF NEGLECT.

Voluntary slavery means voluntary renunciation of the chief privilege of human reason: the privilege of self-control. The spendthrift divests himself of external advantages; the miser yields up his life-blood for gold; but he who surrenders his personal liberty has sold his soul, as well as his body. Bondage circumscribes every sphere of activity. Political despotism impedes the progress of industry as galling fetters impede the circulation of the blood. Enterprising autocrats of the Frederic and Peter type have as utterly failed in the attempt of enforcing a flourishing state of commerce, as they would have failed in the attempt of enforcing the growth of a stunted tree by the tension of iron chains. In free America a voluntary pledge of abstinence has accomplished what in medieval Europe the most Draconic temperance and anti-tobacco laws failed to achieve.

The educational despotism of moral pedants has ever defeated its own purpose, and succeeded only in turning frank, merry-souled children into hypocrites

and sneaks. The idea that a barbarous system of military discipline could develop model warriors has been refuted on hundreds of battle-fields, where the machine-soldiers of despotic kings were routed by the onset of enthusiastic patriots, half-trained, perhaps, and ill-armed, but assembled by an enlistment of souls as well as of bodies. The unparalleled intellectual barrenness of the Middle Ages was well explained by the indictment of a modern English poet. "The bondage of the Christian doctrine," says Percy Shelley, "is fatal to the development of originality and genius." The curse of mediocrity has, indeed, for ages rested upon every literary product devoted to the promotion of clerical interests. The Muses refuse to assemble on Golgotha. Pegasus declines to be yoked with the ass of the Galilean ascetic. Outspoken skepticism is almost as rare as true genius, and it is not possible to mistake the significance of the fact that the great poets and philosophers of the last seven generations were, almost without an exception, persistent and outspoken skeptics. Rousseau, Voltaire, Diderot, D'Alembert, Holbach, Leibnitz, Lessing, Kant, Fichte, Hegel, Schiller, Heine, Schopenhauer, Humboldt, Pope, Hume, Byron, Shelley, Keats, Gibbon, Buckle, and Darwin have all inscribed their names in the temple of Liberalism; and Wolfgang Goethe, the primate of European literature, was at once the most consistent and the most anti-Christian of modern thinkers. "His personal appearance," says Heinrich Heine, "was as harmonious as his mind. A proudly erect body, never yet bent by Christian worm-humility;

classic features, never distorted by Christian contrition; eyes that had never been dimmed by Christian sinner-tears or the apathy of monkish resignation."

That resignation was for centuries enforced as the first of moral duties; but Nature has had her revenge, and even the fallen hierarchy would hesitate to recover the loss of their prestige by a return to the moral desert which for ages marked the empire of a mind-enslaving dogma.

E.—REFORM.

Not all slaves can be freed by breaking their shackles; the habit of servitude may become a hereditary vice, too inveterate for immediate remedies. The pupils of Freedom's school may be required to unlearn, as well as to learn, many lessons; the temples of the future will have to remove several aphoristic tablets to make room for such mottoes as "Self-Reliance," "Liberty," "Independence." Victor Jacquemont tells a memorable story of a Hindoo village, almost depopulated by a famine caused by the depredations of sacred monkeys, that made constant raids on the fields and gardens of the superstitious peasants, who would see their children starve to death rather than lift a hand against the long-tailed saints. At last the British stadtholder saw a way to relieve their distress. He called a meeting of their *sirdars* and offered them free transportation to a monkeyless island of the Malay archipelago. Learning that the land of the proposed colony was fertile and thinly settled, the survivors accepted the

proposal with tears of gratitude ; but when the band of gaunt refugees embarked at the mouth of the Hooglyn, the stadtholder's agent was grieved to learn that their cargo of household goods included a large cageful of sacred monkeys. "They are beyond human help," says the official memorandum, "and their children can be redeemed only by curing them of the superstition that has ruined their monkey-ridden ancestors."

At the end of the fifteenth century, when southern Europe was in danger of a similar fate from the rapacity of esurient priests and monks, Providence, by means of an agent called Christoval Columbus, offered the victims the chance of a free land of refuge ; but when the host of emigrants embarked at the harbor of Palos, philosophers must have been grieved to perceive that their cargo of household-pets comprised a large assortment of ecclesiastics. "They are beyond human help," Experience might sigh in the words of the British commissioner, "and their children can be redeemed only by curing them of the superstition that has proved the ruin of their priest-ridden ancestors."

In regions of our continent where colonists might live as independent as the birds of their primeval forests, bondage has been imported in the form of an intriguing hierarchy, working its restless bellows to forge the chains of their pupils—of the rising generation, who as yet seem to hesitate at the way-fork of Feudalism and Reform. A timely word may decide their choice, and, by all the remaining hopes of

Earth and Mankind ! that word shall not remain unspoken.

CHAPTER VIII.

PRUDENCE.

A.—LESSONS OF INSTINCT.

The first germs of animal life have been traced to the soil of the tropics, and in the abundance of a perennial summer the instincts of pleasure and pain may long have sufficed for the protection of mere existence. But when the progress of organic development advanced toward the latitude of the winterlands, the vicissitudes of the struggle for existence gradually evolved a third instinct: The faculty of anticipating the menace of evil and providing the means of defense. The word *Prudence* is derived from a verb which literally means *fore-seeing*, and that faculty of *Foresight* manifests itself already in that curious thrift which enables several species of insects to survive the long winter of the higher latitudes. Hibernating mammals show a similar sagacity in the selection of their winter quarters. Squirrels and marmots gather armfuls of dry moss; bears excavate a den under the shelter of a fallen tree; and it has been noticed that cave-loving bats generally select a cavern on the south side of a mountain or rock. Beavers anticipate floods by elaborate dams. Several species of birds baffle the attacks of their enemies by fastening a bag-shaped nest to the ex-

tremity of a projecting branch. Foxes, minks, raccoons, and other *carnivora* generally undertake their forages during the darkest hour of the night. Prowling wolves carefully avoid the neighborhood of human dwellings and have been known to leap a hundred fences rather than cross or approach a highway.

Young birds, clamoring for food, suddenly become silent at the approach of a hunter; and Dr. Moffat noticed with surprise that a similar instinct seemed to influence the nurslings of the Griqua Hottentots. Ten or twelve of them, deposited by their mothers in the shade of a tree, all clawing each other and crowing or bawling at the top of their voices, would abruptly turn silent at the approach of a stranger, and huddle together behind the roots of the tree—babies of ten months as quietly cowering and as cautiously peeping as their elders of two or three years. Young savages, and often the children of our rustics, show an extreme caution in accepting an offer of unknown delicacies. I have seen a toddling farmer's boy smelling and nibbling an orange for hours before yielding to the temptation of its prepossessing appearance. Only the distress of protracted starvation will induce the Esquimaux to touch their winter stores before the end of the hunting season; and the supposed improvidence of savages is often due to the influence of a hereditary disposition once justified by the abundance which their forefathers enjoyed for ages before the advent of their Caucasian despoilers.

B.—REWARDS OF CONFORMITY.

Civilization has partially healed the wounds of that Millennium of Madness called the Rule of the Cross, and of all the insanities of the Middle Ages the *Improvidence Dogma* has perhaps been most effectually eradicated from the mental constitution—at least, of the North-Caucasian nations. Instead of relying on the efficacy of prayers and ceremonies, the dupes of the Galilean miracle-monger at last returned to the pagan plan of self-help, and it would not be too much to say that the progress thus achieved in the course of the last fourteen decades far exceeds that of the preceding fourteen centuries. Earth has once more become a fit dwelling-place for her noblest children. Pestilential swamps have been drained. Domestic hotbeds of disease have been expurgated. Airy, weather-proof buildings have taken the place of the reeking hovels that housed the laborers of the Middle Ages. Farmers no longer live from hand to mouth. The price of the necessities and many luxuries of life has been brought within the resources of the humblest mechanic. Affluence is no longer confined to the palaces of kings. There is no doubt that the cottage of the average modern city tradesman contains more comforts than could be found in the castle of a medieval nobleman. Prudence, in the sense of economic foresight, has become almost a second nature with the industrial classes of the higher latitudes, and the benefits of such habits can be best appreciated by comparing the homes of the thrifty Northlanders—Scotch and Yankees—with those of the

Spanish-American priest-dupes: here deserts tilled into gardens, there gardens wasted into deserts. In natural resources, South America, for instance, excels New England as New England excels the snow-wastes of Hudson's Bay Territory; yet industrial statistics demonstrate the fact that the financial resources of Massachusetts alone not only equal but far surpass those of the entire Brazilian empire.

The contrast between Prussia and Spain is not less striking, and that climatic causes are insufficient to explain that contrast is proved by the curious fact that within less than five centuries Spain and North Germany have exchanged places. Two hundred years before the conquest of Granada the fields of Moorish Spain had been brought to a degree of productiveness never surpassed in the most favored regions of our own continent, while Catholic Prussia was a bleak heather. Since the expulsion of the Moors from Spain, and the monks from northern Germany, Prussia has become a garden and Spain a desert; the contrasting results of prudence and superstition. While the Prussians were at work the Spaniards were whining to their saints, or embroidering petticoats for an image of the holy Virgin. While the countrymen of Humboldt studied chemistry, physiology, and rational agriculture, the countrymen of Loyola conned oriental ghost stories; while the former placed their trust in the promises of nature, the latter trusted in the promises of the New Testament. Prudence, rather than military prowess, has transferred the *hegemony* of Europe from the Ebro to the Elbe, and prudence alone has smoothened even the path of exile

which ill-fated Israel has pursued now for more than a thousand years. For, with all the Spiritualistic tendency of their ethics, the children of Jacob have long ceased to deal in miracles, and train their children in lessons of secular realism which effectually counteract the influence of their school-training in the lessons of the past, and as a result famine has been banished from the tents of the exiles. Like the Corsicans and the prudent Scots, they rarely marry before the acquisition of a competency, but the tendency of that habit does not prevent their numerical increase. Their children do not perish in squalor and hunger; their patriarchs do not burden our almshouses.

C.—PERVERSION.

There is a story of an enterprising Italian who increased the patronage of an unpopular mountain resort by effecting an inundation of the lowlands; and if the apostles of other-worldliness had tried to enhance the attractions of their hereafter on the same plan, they could certainly not have adopted a more effective method for depreciating the value of temporal existence. The vanity of work, of thrift, of economy, and the superior merit of reliance on the aid of preternatural agencies, were a favorite text of the Galilean messiah. "Take no thought of the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself." "Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? what shall we drink? or wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these do the gentiles seek." "Ask and it shall be given you."

Secular foresight was depreciated even in the form of a prudent care for the preservation of physical health; the selection of clean in preference to unclean food was denounced as a relic of worldliness; and in mitigating the consequences of such insults to nature, prayer and mystic ceremonies were recommended as superior to secular remedies. "If any man is sick among you, let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." "And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up." "And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits to cast them out, and to heal all manner of disease."

If such instructions had been followed to the letter, the human race would have perished in a hell of madness and disease. As it was, a thousand years' purgatory of half insanity cured the world of its delusion; and the sinners against the laws of common sense escaped with the penalty of a millennium of barbarism, a barbarism which, in the most orthodox countries of the fourteenth century, had sunk deep below the lowest ebb of pagan savagery. The untutored hunters of the primeval German forest were at least left to the resources of their animal instincts; they were illiterate, but manly and generous, braving danger, and prizing health and liberty above all earthly blessings. Their children were dragged off to the bondage of the Christian convents and doomed to all the misery of physical restraint, not for the sake of their intellectual culture, not with a view of

purchasing the comforts of after years by temporal self-denial, but to educate them in habits of physical apathy and supine reliance on the aid of interposing saints—a habit which at last revenged itself by its transfer to the principles of ethics, and encouraged malefactors to trust their eternal welfare to the same expedient to which indolence had been taught to confide its temporal interests. Where was the need of rectitude if iniquity could be compromised by prayer? Where was the need of industry if its fruits could be obtained by faith? Where was the need of sanitary precautions if the consequences of their neglect could be averted by ceremonies?

D.—PENALTIES OF NEGLECT.

The consequences of that dogma refuted its claims by lessons which mankind is not apt to forget for the next hundred generations. From the day when the doctrine of Antinaturalism succeeded in superseding the lingering influence of pagan philosophy, progressive industry waned, and at last almost ceased to supply even a reduced demand; commerce lingered, and the sources of subsistence were wholly confined to the produce of a more and more impoverished soil. With the exception of (still half pagan) Italy, not one of the many once prosperous countries of Christian Europe had anything like a profitable export trade. On the international markets of the Byzantine empire the products of skilled labor—fine clothes, fine fruits, perfume, and jewelry—were sold by oriental merchants, while the Christian buyers had little to offer in exchange but the spontaneous

products of Nature: timber, salt, amber, and perhaps hides and wool. Medical science had become such a medley of vagaries and barbarisms that even the princes of Christendom could not boast of a competent family physician, and in critical cases had to trust their lives to the skill of Moorish or Persian doctors. Abderaman el Hakim, a king of Moorish Spain, had so many applications for the services of his court-doctor that he often jestingly called him the "Savior of Christian Europe." The prevalence of the militant type should certainly have encouraged the manufacture of warlike implements; yet not one of the twelve heavy-armed countries of Trinitarian Europe had preserved the art of tempering a first-class sword, and proof-steel had to be imported from Damascus. The traditions of architecture were limited to the fantastic elaboration of religious edifices; peasants dwelt in hovels, and citizens in dingy stone prisons, crowded into crooked and cobble-paved alleys.

The unspeakable filth of such alleys produced epidemics that almost depopulated the most orthodox countries of medieval Europe. Under the stimulus of clerical theories, those epidemics in their turn produced outbreaks of fanatical superstition, which in pagan Rome would certainly have been ascribed to the influence of a contagious mental disease. Diseases, according to a doctrine which it was deemed blasphemy to doubt, could be averted by prayer and self-humiliation. In spite of a diligent application of such prophylactics, diseases of the most virulent kind became more prevalent. The

logical inference seemed that prayer had not been fervent and self-abasement not abject enough. Hordes of religious maniacs roamed the streets of the plague-stricken cities, howling like hyenas and lacerating their bodies in a manner too shocking to describe. After exhausting the available means of subsistence, the blood-smeared wretches would invade the open country, and by frantic appeals frighten thousands of peasants into joining their ranks, and in carrying the seeds of mental and physical contagion to a neighboring country. In Germany and Holland the total number of "Flagellants" were at one time estimated at three hundred and fifty thousand; on another occasion at more than half a million. If the disease had exhausted its fury, the self-torturers would claim the reward of their services by falling like hungry wolves upon the homes of the sane survivors. If the plague refused to abate, the leading fanatics would ascribe the failure to their followers' want of zeal, and enforce their theory by an indiscriminate application of a rawhide knout, till the dispute was referred to the arbitrament of cold steel, and the ranks of the howling maniacs were thinned by mutual slaughter.

E.—REWARDS.

The world has trusted in the doctrine of miracle-mongers till skepticism became a condition of self-preservation, and the benefits of open revolt are now conspicuous enough to impress even the non-insurrected slaves of the church. With all their hereditary bias of prejudice the victims of the miracle dogma

cannot help contrasting their lot with that of the industrial skeptic. They cannot help seeing self-reliant science succeeds where prayer-relying orthodoxy fails. The prosperity of Protestantism, its physical, intellectual, political, and financial superiority to Conservatism, with the aid of all its saints, are facts too glaringly evident to ignore their significance, and our ethical text-books might as well plainly admit that this universe of ours is governed by uniform laws and not by the caprice of ghosts—at all events not of ghosts that can be influenced by rant and ceremonies. Whatever may be the established system of other worlds, in this planet of ours Nature has not trusted our welfare to the whims of tricky spooks, but has endowed our own minds with the faculty of ascertaining and improving the conditions of that welfare; and the time cannot come too soon when well-directed labor shall be recognized as the only prayer ever answered to the inhabitants of this earth.

The philosophic author of the "History of Morals" remarks that the medieval miracle-creed still lurks in the popular explanation of the more occult phenomena. While the natural sequence of cause and effect is, for instance, freely admitted in such plain cases as the stability of a well-built house and the collapse of a rickety structure, the phenomena of health and disease, of atmospheric changes or of the (apparent) caprices of fortune in war or games of chance are still ascribed to the interference of preternatural agencies. That bias is undoubtedly at the bottom of the still prevalent mania for hazardous speculation

and the reckless disregard of the laws governing the condition of our physical health.

Unconfessed, and perhaps unknown, to themselves the grandchildren of orthodox parents are still influenced by the hope that in such cases the event of an imprudent venture might be modified by the interceding favor of "providence."

Secularism should teach its converts that the most complex as well as the simplest effect is the necessary consequence of a natural cause; that the "power behind phenomena" acts by consistent laws, and that the study and practical application of those laws is the only way to bias the favor of fortune.

"Pray and you shall receive," says Superstition. "Sow if you would reap," says Science. The Religion of Nature will teach every man to answer his own prayers, and Prudence will be the Providence of the Future.

CHAPTER IX.

PERSEVERANCE.

A.—LESSONS OF INSTINCT.

In the course of evolution from brute to man some of our organs have been highly developed by constant use, while others have been stunted by habitual disuse. In special adaptations of the sense of touch and sight, for instance, man surpasses all his fellow-creatures, most of whom, in turn, surpass him in the acuteness of their olfactory organs. An analogous result seems to have been produced by the exercise or

neglect of certain mental faculties and dispositions. The instinct of enterprise, for instance, has been developed from rather feeble germs of the animal soul, while the instinct of perseverance appears to have lost something of its pristine energy. The African termite ant rears structures which, in proportion to the size of the builders, surpass the pyramids as a mountain surpasses the monuments of the mound-builders. By the persistent coöperation of countless generations the tiny architect of the coral reefs has girt a continent with a rampart of sea-walls. The prairie wolf will follow a trail for half a week. The teeth of a mouse are thinner and more brittle than a darning needle, yet by dint of perseverance gnawing mice manage to perforate the stoutest planks. Captive prairie dogs have been known to tunnel their way through forty feet of compact loam.

An instinct, which one might be tempted to call a love of perseverance for its own sake, seems sometimes to influence the actions of young children. There are boys whose energies seem to be roused by the resistance of inanimate things. I have seen lads of eight or nine years hew away for hours at knotty logs which even a veteran woodcutter would have been pardoned for flinging aside. There are school-boys, not otherwise distinguished for love of books, who will forego their recess sports to puzzle out an arithmetical problem of special intricacy.

Our desultory mode of education hardly tends to encourage that disposition which, nevertheless, is now and then apt to develop into a permanent character trait. There are young men who will act out a self-

determined programme of study or business with persistent disregard of temporary hardships, and pursue even minor details of their plan with a resolution only strengthened by difficulties. The moral ideals of antiquity seem to have been more favorable to the development of that type of character, which also manifests itself in the national policy of several ancient republics, and the inflexible consistency of their legal institutions.

B.—REWARDS OF CONFORMITY.

The advantages of perseverance are not too readily admitted by the numberless victims of that facile disposition that loves to ascribe its foibles to the "versatility of genius," or a high-minded "aversion to pedantic routine;" yet now, as in the days of yore, life reserves its best rewards for the most persistent competitors. Singleness of purpose, like a sharp wedge, forces its way through obstacles that resist many-sided endeavors. The versatile poets and philosophers of Athens have wreathed her memory with unrivaled laurels, yet in the affairs of practical life her merchants were out-traded, her politicians out-witted, and her generals beaten by men whose nations had steadfastly followed a narrower but consistent policy. "*Aut non tentaris aut perferce*," "either try not, or persevere," was a Roman proverb that made Rome the mistress of three continents. In the Middle Ages the dynasty of the Abbassides, as in modern times the house of the Hohenzollern, attained supremacy by persistent adherence to an established system of political tactics. Even question-

able enterprises have thus been crowned with triumph, as the ambitions of the Roman pontiffs, and the projects of Ignatius Loyola. The chronicles of war, of industry, and of commerce abound with analogous lessons. Patient perseverance succeeds where fitful vehemence fails. In countless battles the steadiness of British and North German troops has prevailed against the enthusiasm of their bravest opponents. The quiet perseverance of British colonists has prevailed against the bustling activity of their Gallic rivals, on the Mississippi and St. Lawrence, as well as on the Ganges and Indus. Steady-going business firms, consistently-edited journals, hold their own, and ultimately absorb their vacillating competitors. Dr. Winship, the Boston Hercules, held that the chances of an athlete "depend on *doggedness of purpose* far more than on hereditary *physique*." Even the apparent caprices of Fortune are biased by the habit of perseverance. "In the Stanislaus mining-camp," says Frederic Gerstaecker, "we had a number of experts who seemed to find gold by a sort of sixth sense, and came across 'indications' wherever they stirred the gravel of the rocky ravines. We called them 'prospectors,' and the brilliancy of their prospects was, indeed, demonstrated by daily proofs. But at the first frown of Fortune they would get discouraged, and remove their exploring outfit to another ravine. Most of the actual work was done by the 'squatters,' as we called the steady diggers, who would take up an abandoned claim and stick to it for weeks. Bragging was not their *forte*, but at the end of the season the squatter could squat down on a

sackful of nuggets, while the prospector had nothing but prospects."

C.—PERVERSION.

The ambition of the ancients was encouraged by the conviction that life is worth living, and that all its social and intellectual summits can be reached by the persistent pursuit of a well-chosen road. But the basis of that confidence was undermined by a doctrine which denied the value of earthly existence, and made the renunciation of worldly blessings the chief purpose of moral education. The pilgrim of life who had been taught to spurn earth as a vale of tears, and turn his hopes to the promises of another world, was not apt to trouble himself about a consistent plan of secular pursuits, which, moreover, he had been distinctly instructed to trust to the chances of the current day: "Take no thought for the morrow;" "Take no thought for your life, nor yet for your body . . . for after all these things do the gentiles seek."

Indecision, inconsistency, fickleness of purpose, vitiated the politics of the Christian nations throughout the long chaos of the Middle Ages, and in their features of individual character there is a strange want of that moral unity and harmony which the consciousness of an attainable purpose gave to the national exemplars of an earlier age.

The Rationalistic reaction of the last two centuries has greatly modified the moral ideals of the Caucasian nations; the legitimacy of secular pursuits is more generally recognized, but still only in a furtive, hesi-

tating manner, and the glaring contrast of our daily practice with the theories of a still prevalent system of ethics cannot fail to involve contradictions incompatible with true consistency of principles and action.

D.—PENALTIES OF NEGLECT.

For thirteen hundred years the importance of perseverance in the pursuit of earthly aims was depreciated by the ethics of Antinaturalism, and the word FAILURE is written in glaring letters over the record of the physical, mental, and moral enterprises of all that period. The nations of northern Europe, whom the prestige of Rome surrendered to the power of popish priests, were giants in stature and strength, and the love of physical health was too deeply rooted in the hereditary constitution of those athletes to be at once eradicated by the machinations of spiritual poison-mongers. Yet the poison did not fail to assert its virulence. Athletic sports were still a favorite pastime of all freemen; but the gospel of the Nature-hating Galilean insisted on the antagonism of physical and moral welfare; penances and the worship of cadaverous saints perverted the manlier ideals of the masses, the encouragement of ascetic habits and the enforced inactivity of convent life undermined the stamina of the noblest nations, and in the course of a few orthodox generations the descendants of the herculean hunter-tribes of northern Europe became a prey to a multitude of malignant diseases.

The love of knowledge still fed on the literary treasures of antiquity; the flame of philosophy was now and then rekindled at the still glowing embers

of pagan civilization; but the doctrine of other-worldliness denounced the pursuit of worldly lore, and science degenerated into a medley of nursery-legends and monkish fever-dreams. Men walked through life as Sindbad walked through the perils of the spirit-vale, in constant dread of spectral manifestations, in constant anticipation of ghostly interference with their earthly concerns, the pursuit of which all but the wisest undertook only in a desultory, tentative way, haunted by the idea that success in worldly enterprises could be bought only at the expense of the immortal soul.

And how many thousand wanderers of our latter-day world have thus been diverted from the path of manful perseverance, and almost directly encouraged in the habit of palliating inconstancy of purpose with that "dissatisfaction and weariness of worldly vanities," which the ethics of their spiritual educators commend as a symptom of regeneration! The voices of re-awakened Nature protest, but only with intermittent success, and the penalty of vacillation is that discord of modern life that will not cease till our system of ethics has been thoroughly purged from the poison of Antinaturalism.

E.—REFORM.

That work of redemption should include an emphatic repudiation of the natural depravity dogma. Our children should be taught that steadfast loyalty to the counsels of their natural reason is sufficient to insure the promotion of their welfare in the only world thus far revealed to our knowledge. The

traditional concomitance of perseverance and mediocrity should be refuted by the explanation of its cause. For a long series of centuries the predominance of insane dogmas had actually made science a mere mockery, and application to the prescribed curriculum of the monastic colleges a clear waste of time—clear to all but the dullest minds. The neglect of such studies, of the disgusting sophistry of the patristic and scholastic era, was, indeed, a proof of common sense, since only dunces and hypocrites could muster the patience required to wade through the dismal swamp of cant, pedantry, and superstition which for thirteen centuries formed the mental pabulum of the priest-ridden academics. During that era of pseudo-science and pseudo-morality, of fulsome rant centered on a monstrous delusion, the *eccentricity* of genius was more than pardonable, being, in fact, the only alternative of mental prostitution. The ideas of waywardness and mental superiority became thus associated in a way which in its results has wrought almost as much mischief as in its cause. The delusions of that idea have wrecked as many promising talents as indolence and intemperance.

The pupils of Secularism should be instructed to observe the benefits of perseverance in the pursuit of minor projects, and encouraged to apply that experience to the higher problems of life. Perseverance should be recognized as the indispensable ally of loftiest genius as well as of the lowliest talent.

Failure in secular enterprises should cease to be regarded as a symptom of divine favor; and for

those who insist on claiming the protection of supernatural agencies, Goethe's grand apostrophe to the Genius of Manhood* should be condensed in the motto that "Heroic perseverance invokes the aid of the gods."

CHAPTER X.

FREETHOUGHT.

A.—LESSONS OF INSTINCT.

The Brahmans have a legend that the first children of man ascended Mount Gunganoor, to visit the castle of Indra and inquire into the secret of their origin. Speculations on the source of life, on the mystery of creation, the cause of good and evil, and similar problems which we might sum up under the name of religious inquiries, seem, indeed, to have occupied the attention of our ancestors at a very early period. An irrepressible instinct appears to prompt the free discussion of such questions, and in a normal state of social relations the attempt to suppress that instinct would have appeared as preposterous as the attempt to enforce silence upon the inquirers into the problems of health or astronomy. A thousand years before the birth of Buddha, the

* Weibisches Klagen, bängliches Zagen
Wendet kein Unglück, macht dich nicht frei:
Allen Gewalten zum Trotz sich eshalten,
Nimmer sich beugen, kräftig sich zeigen
Rufet die Arme der Götter herbei.

Sakyas, or ethic philosophers, of northern Hindostan visited the mountain-passes of Himalaya to converse with travelers and seek information on the religious customs and traditions of foreign nations. The book of Job, probably the oldest literary product of the Semitic nations, records a series of free and often, indeed, absolutely *agnostic* discussions of ethical and cosmological problems.

"Canst thou by searching find out God?" says Zophar. "It is as high as heaven: what canst thou do? It is deeper than hell: what canst thou know?"

"Is it good unto thee that thou shouldst oppress the work of thy own hand?" Job asks his creator; "thine hands have made me; why dost thou destroy me? Thou huntest me like a fierce lion. Wherefore, then, hast thou brought me forth out of the womb? Oh, that I had given up the ghost and no eye had seen me! I should have been as though I had not been; I should have been carried from the womb to the grave. Are not my days few? Cease, then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little, before I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death."

And again: "Man dieth and wasteth away; man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? As the waters fall from the sea and the flood dryeth up: so man lieth down and riseth not; till the heavens be no more he shall not awake nor be raised out of his sleep." . . . "If a man die, shall he live again?" "Wherefore is light given unto them that are in misery, and life unto the bitter in soul? who long

for death, but it cometh not ; who rejoice exceedingly and are glad when they can find the grave ?”

Or Elihu's interpellation: “Look up to heaven and see the clouds which are higher than thou: If thou sinnest, what doest thou against *him*? If thou be righteous, what givest thou to him, or what can he receive of thine hand?”

Could a committee of modern skeptics and philosophers discuss the problems of existence with greater freedom?

For a series of centuries the monkish custodians of the literary treasures of Greece and Rome expurgated the writings of the bolder Freethinkers, and for the sake of its mere parchment destroyed more than one work that would have been worth whole libraries of their own lucubrations ; yet even the scant relics of pagan literature furnish abundant proofs of the ethical and metaphysical liberty which the philosophers of the Mediterranean nations enjoyed for nearly a thousand years. The marvelous development of Grecian civilization in art, science, politics, literature, and general prosperity coincided with a period of almost unlimited religious freedom. Speculations on the origin of religious myths were propounded with an impunity which our latter-day Freethinkers have still cause to envy. The possibility of all definite knowledge of the attributes of the deity was boldly denied two thousand years before the birth of Emmanuel Kant. The Freethinker Diagoras traveled from city to city, propagating his system of Agnosticism with a publicity which seems to imply a degree of tolerance never

yet re-attained in the progress of the most intellectual modern nations. The skeptic Pyrrho ridiculed the absurdity of all our modern Secularists would include under the name of *other-worldliness*. A Roman actor was applauded with cheers and laughter for quoting a passage to the effect that "if the gods exist, they seem to conduct their administration on the principle of strict neutrality in the affairs of mankind!"

Democritus, Euhemerus, Anaxagoras, Epicurus, Aristotle, Libanius, Pliny, Lucretius, and the latter Pythagoreans, almost entirely ignored the doctrines of Polytheism, which, indeed, never assumed an aggressive form, the attempted suppression of the Christian dogmatists being an only apparent exception, dictated by motives of political apprehensions, rather than by religious zeal; for at the very time when the followers of the life-hating Galilean were persecuted as "enemies of mankind," a large number of other oriental religions enjoyed privileges bordering on license. The Grecian colonists of Asia Minor never interfered with the religious customs of their new neighbors. They studied and discussed them as they would study the curiosities of other social phenomena; and a purely naturalistic system of education would undoubtedly lead to analogous results. Intelligent children often evince a remarkable tact in avoiding certain topics of conversation, such as allusions to personal or national defects, scandals, the *arcana* of sexual relations, private affairs, etc., and the experience of after years may confirm such habits of discretion; but no conceivable motive but

deference to an arbitrary precept could dictate a similar reticence in the discussion of purely metaphysical topics, or of dogmas which by their very pretense to a mission of extreme importance should justify an extreme frankness in debating the basis of their claims.

B.—REWARDS OF CONFORMITY.

Religious liberty guarantees every other kind of freedom, as every form of slavery walks in the train of priestly despotism. In America religious emancipation led the way to the Declaration of Independence, and still continues to make this continent the chosen home of thousands of Liberals whom the material prosperity of the New World would have failed to attract. It is possible that a policy of intolerance would have averted or postponed the fate of the Moorish empire, which was ultimately overthrown by the fanatics of a creed which the followers of a more rational faith had permitted to survive in their midst; yet it is not less certain that for nearly five hundred years religious tolerance made the realm of the Spanish caliphs the one bright Goshen in a world of intellectual darkness. In northern Europe the history of civilization begins only with the triumph of Rationalism. *Protestantism*, in that wider sense which made the revolt of the Germanic nations an insurrection against the powers of superstition, has laid the foundation of national prosperity in Great Britain, in the Netherlands, and in the rising empire of northern Germany. The real founder of that empire was at once the greatest statesman

and the boldest Freethinker of the last fourteen centuries. His capital became a city of refuge for the philosophers of Christian Europe. The eastern provinces of his kingdom were colonized by refugees from the tyranny of clerical autocrats. His absolute tolerance protected even the Jesuits, expelled by the Catholic rulers of France and Spain. During the reign of that crowned philosopher the religious and political dissenters of Prussia expressed their views with a freedom which in semi-republican England would have involved them in a maze of endless law-suits. Among the fruits of that freedom were products of science and philosophy which have made that period the classic age of German literature. "Before the appearance of Kant's 'Critique of Pure Reason,'" says Schopenhauer, "the works of duly installed government professors of philosophy were mostly medleys of sophisms, pretending to reconcile science and dogma, or reason and despotism. Here, at last, a state university could boast of a man who lived at once *by* and *for* the service of Truth—a phenomenon made possible only by the circumstance that, for the first time since the days of the great Aurelius and the greater Julian, a Freethinker had mounted the throne of an independent monarchy."

The protection of Freethought is likewise the best safeguard against that virus of hypocrisy that has undermined the moral health of so many modern nations.

"What an incalculable advantage to a nation as well as to its ruler," says a modern philosopher, "to know that the pillars of state are founded on

the eternal verities, on natural science, logic, and arithmetic, instead of casuistry and immaculate conceptions !”

The consciousness of that advantage has more than once upheld the birthland of Protestantism in its struggles against the allied powers of despotism, and should uphold our republic in the inevitable struggle against the allied despots of the twentieth century.

C.—PERVERSION.

The experience of the last sixteen centuries has made priestcraft almost a synonym of intolerance ; and yet it would be a mistake to suppose that the interests of Freethought are incompatible with the survival of any system of supernatural religion. The myths of polytheism were for ages accepted as the basis of a creed enjoying all the prerogatives and emoluments of an established religion, but the priests of that religion had no need of protecting their prestige by the butchery of heretics. With all their absurdities, the rites of their creed were essentially a worship of Nature, naturally attractive to all lovers of earth and life, and by their harmlessness conciliating the favor of philosophers who might have studied the baneful tendencies of a different creed—a creed which could propagate its dogmas only by an unremitting war against the natural instincts of the human race, and by constant intrigues against the protests of human reason. “The Nature-worshipping Greeks repeated the harmless myths and practiced the merry rites of their creed for centuries without troubling themselves about the myths and rites of their neigh-

bors. Their superstition differed from that of the church as the inspired love of Nature differs from the ecstatic fury of her enemies, as the day-dream of a happy child differs from the fever-dream of a gloomy fanatic. '*Procul Profani!*' was the cry of the Eleusinian priests. They had more followers than they wanted. Their joy-loving creed could dispense with *autos-da-fé*. The Hebrews, in stress of famine, conquered a little strip of territory between Arabia and the Syrian desert, and then tried their best to live in peace with heaven and earth, and their sects contented themselves with metaphorical rib-roastings. The Saracens spread their conquests from Spain to the Ganges, but their wars had a physical, rather than metaphysical, purpose. They needed land, and made a better use of it than the former occupants. They contented themselves with assessing dissenters, and did not deem it necessary to assassinate them. But the Galilean pessimists could not afford to tolerate an unconverted neighbor. To the enemies of Nature the happiness of an earth-loving, garden-planting, and science-promoting nation was an intolerable offense: reason had to be sacrificed to faith, health and happiness to the cross, and earth to heaven" (The Secret of the East, p. 62).

And even in the modified form of Protestant Christianity, that creed remains the rancorous enemy of Freethought. The doctrine of the Galilean Buddhist is essentially a doctrine of pessimism, of other-worldliness and Nature-hating renunciation of human reason and earthly prosperity, and therefore wholly irreconcilable with the promotion of progressive

science and secular happiness. Philosophers have for centuries assembled their scholars undisturbed by the songs and dances of pagan festivals; the exponents of secular science have enjoyed the goodwill of health-loving Hebrews and Mohammedans, and will find a *modus vivendi* with the Spiritualists and Theosophists of the future; but Secularism, "the Science of Happiness on Earth," can never hope to conciliate the dogmatists of a creed that denies the value of life itself, and wages war against Nature as well as against the claims of natural science.

D.—PENALTIES OF NEGLECT.

Wherever Reason surrenders to Dogma, the exponents of that dogma will claim unreasonable prerogatives. Irresponsible dogmatists have never failed to pursue the interests of their creed at the expense of the interests of mankind. The lessons of Science could not be reconciled with the doctrines of Antinaturalism, and in the interest of that doctrine the spiritual taskmasters of medieval Europe suppressed Science by methods that have retarded the progress of mankind for thirteen hundred years. The suppression of Freethought enabled the enemies of Nature to complete their triumph by the suppression of social and political liberty; and for ages the church has been the faithful ally of Despotism. The priest-ridden rulers of the expiring Roman empire and the priest-ridden rabble of the Roman provinces assisted in the persecution of Freethought, and that crime against reason was avenged by the development of a system of spiritual tyranny which at last forced even

princes to kiss the dust of Canossa and degraded the lot of peasants beneath that of savages and wild beasts. The war against natural science avenged itself in the neglect of agriculture, and the enormous spread of deserts, which the priests of the Galilean miracle-monger proposed to reclaim by prayer-meetings. The surrender of Freethought to faith sealed the fate of millions of heretics and "sorcerers," who expiated an imaginary crime in the agonies of the stake. Not the abrogation of civil rights, not the intimidation of princes and commoners, but the eradication of Freethought, enabled the priests of an unnatural creed to enforce their hideous superstitions upon the prisoners of the numberless monasteries which for a series of centuries combined all the conditions for the systematic suppression of moral, intellectual, and personal freedom.

"I am not come to bring peace but the sword," said the ingenuous founder of a creed which could not fail to produce an irrepressible conflict between the delusions of its doctrines and the inspirations of nature and science—and, of course, also between the would-be followers of its own preposterous precepts—and neither the lust of conquest nor the jealousy of rival nations has ever stained this earth with the torrents of blood shed by the bigots of that creed after its triumph over the protests of Freethought. The fatuous attempt to crush out dissent by substituting a roll of parchment for the book of Nature avenged itself by murderous wars about the interpretation of those same parchments. The dogmatists who had tried to perpetuate their power by the mur-

der of modest rationalists, were assailed by hordes of their own irrationalists, raging about the ceremonial details of the wafer-rite and the immersion rite. The bigots who had refused to heed the pleadings of Bruno and Campanella were forced to acknowledge the battle-axe logic of the Hussites.

E.—REFORM.

Truth that prevails against error also prevails against half truths, and the recognition of just claims cannot be furthered by unjust concessions. Uncompromising right is mightiest, and Freethinkers would have served their cause more effectually if they had contended, not for the favor to enjoy a privilege, but the right to fulfil a duty. The ministry of reason imposes obligations to posterity, and to the memory of its bygone martyrs, as well as to our help-needing contemporaries; and the defense of its rights is a truer religion than submission to the yoke of a mind-enslaving dogma. The Rishis, or sainted hermits of Brahmanism, used to devote themselves to the service of a forest temple, and guard its sanctuary against vermin and reptiles; and the believers in a personal God cannot devote their lives to a nobler task than by guarding his temples against the serpent of priestly despotism.

The disciples of Secularism should learn to value the right of Freethought as the palladium of their faith, as the basis of all other blessings—moral and material, as well as intellectual. They should learn to revere the memory of the martyrs of their faith, and recognize the importance of their services to the

cause of modern civilization and its sacred principles; but they should also learn to recognize the magnitude of the remaining task. It is no trifle that the prevalent system of ethics and the temporal and eternal hopes of millions of our brethren are still based on a lie. It is no trifle that the health and happiness of millions of our fellow-men are still sacrificed on the altar of that untruth by the suppression of public recreations on the only day when a large plurality of our working-men find their only chance of leisure. It is no trifle that honest men are still branded as "Infidels," "renegades," and "scoffers," for refusing to kneel in the temple of a nature-hating fanatic. The struggle against the spirits of darkness is by no means yet decided in Italy, where the arch-hierarchy is spinning restless intrigues to regain the power which for ages made Europe a Gehenna of misery and despotism. Nor in Spain, where a swarm of clerical vampires is still sucking the life-blood of an impoverished nation. Nor in Austria and southern Germany, where the alliance of church and state remains a constant menace to the scant liberties of the people.

Freethinkers need not underrate the influence of individual efforts to recognize the superior advantage of organized coöperation, so urgently needed for the reform of Sabbath laws, of press laws, and the educational system of the numerous colleges still intrusted to the control of the Jesuitical enemies of science. The strength-in-union principle should encourage the oft-debated projects for the establishment of Freethought colleges (as well as Freethought

communities); but still more decisive results could be hoped from that union of the powers of knowledge and of moral courage which has never yet failed to insure the triumph of social reforms. We should cease to plead for favors where we can claim an indisputable right. We should cease to admit the right of mental prostitutes to enforce the penalties of social ostracism against the champions of science; but we, in our turn, should deserve the prestige of that championship by scorning the expedients of the moral cowardice which strains at gnats and connives at beams, attacking superstition in the harmless absurdities of its ceremonial institutions, and sparing the ruinous dogmas that have drenched the face of earth with the blood of her noblest children, and turned vast areas of garden-lands into hopeless deserts. The skeptics who scoff at the inconsistencies of a poor clergyman who tries in vain to reconcile the instincts of his better nature with the demands of an anti-natural creed, should themselves be consistent enough to repudiate the worship of the fatal founder of that creed, and not let the hoary age of the Galilean doctrine palliate the tendencies of its life-blighting delusions.

III.—MORAL MAXIMS.

CHAPTER XI.

JUSTICE.

A.—LESSONS OF INSTINCT.

Moral philosophers have long conjectured the distinction between natural and conventional duties; and only the full recognition of that distinction can reconcile the conflicting views on the natural basis of ethics. On the other hand, the defenders of the theory of "Intuitive Morality" claim the existence of an innate moral conscience, common to all nations and all stages of social development, while, on the other hand, we hear it as confidently asserted that the standards of virtue are mere standards of expedience, and vary with circumstances as fashions vary with seasons and climates. There is no doubt, for instance, that religious bigotry has begot a sort of factitious conscience, shrinking from the mere idea of devoting the seventh day of the week to physical recreations, while the devotees of the joy-loving gods of paganism thought it a solemn duty to celebrate their holidays with festive revels. Marriage between persons of adventitious relationship (such as widows and their surviving brothers-in-law) is prohibited by the statutes of one creed, and not only sanctioned, but distinctly enjoined, by those of

another. Speculative dogmas that would deeply shock the followers of Abd el Wahab are tolerated in Constantinople and venerated in Rome.

But such contrasts diminish, and at last disappear, as we turn our attention from conventional to essential duties. A Mussulman bigot, who would slay his son for drinking wine in honor of a supplementary god, would agree with the worshipers of that god that theft is a crime and benevolence a virtue. The innkeepers of Palermo obey their church and spite heretics by selling meat in June, but not in March. The innkeepers of El Medina spite unbelievers and honor the Koran by selling meat in March, but not in June. The Buddhist innkeepers of Lassa sell only salt meat, imported from China, and spite Infidels by refusing to kill a cow under any circumstances. But Sicilians, Thibetans, and Arabs would agree that no innkeeper should be permitted to spite a personal enemy by salting his meat with arsenic. Nations that totally disagree in their notions of propriety, in matters of taste, and in their bias of religious prejudice, will nevertheless be found to agree on the essential standards of humanity and justice. The "instinct of equity," as Leibnitz calls the sense of natural justice, has been still better defined as the "instinct of keeping contracts." A state of Nature is not always a state of equal rights. Skill, strength, and knowledge enjoy the advantage of superior power in the form of manifold privileges, but the expediency of "keeping contracts" naturally recommends itself as the only safe basis of social intercourse. Those contracts need not always be

specified by written laws. They need not even be formulated in articulate speech. Their obligations are tacitly recognized as a preliminary of any sort of social coöperation, of any sort of social concomitance. "Give every man his due;" "Pay your debts;" "Give if you would receive," are international maxims, founded on the earliest impressions of social instinct, rather than on the lessons of social science or of preternatural revelation. The first discoverers of the South Sea Islands were amazed by a license of sexual intercourse that seemed to exceed the grossest burlesques of French fiction; but they were almost equally surprised by the scrupulous exactness of commercial fair-dealing observed by those incontinent children of Nature. An islander, who had agreed to pay three bagfuls of yam-roots for a common pocket-knife, delivered two bagfuls (all his canoe would hold) before the evening of the next day, and received his knife, as the sailors had about all the provisions they could use. But the next morning, in trying to leave the coast by tacking against a fitful breeze, they were overtaken by a canoe, containing a desperately-rowing savage and that third bag of yam-roots. The traveler Chamisso mentions a tribe of Siberian fishermen who boarded his ship to deliver a harpoon which former visitors had forgotten in their winter-camp. Theft, according to the testimony even of their Roman adversaries, was almost unknown among the hunting-tribes of the primitive German woodlands. The natives of San Salvador received their Spanish invaders with respectful hospitality, and scrupulously abstained from purloining, or even

touching, any article of their ship-stores; and a similar reception welcomed their arrival in Cuba and San Domingo, the natives being apparently unable to conceive the idea that their guests could repay good with evil. "Fair play" is the motto of boyish sports in the kraals of Kaffir-land, not less than on the recess-ground of Eton College. A rudimentary sense of justice manifests itself even among social animals. A baboon who wantonly attacks an in-offensive fellow-ape is liable to get mobbed by the whole troop. A nest-robbing hawk has to beat an immediate retreat under penalty of being attacked by all the winged neighbors and relatives of his victims. Dogs that will endure the most inhuman methods of training are not apt to forgive an act of gratuitous cruelty. They may resign themselves to a system of consistent severity, but refuse to submit to evident injustice.

B.—REWARDS OF CONFORMITY.

Justice is the royal attribute of noble souls; the most inalienable crown of their prestige. Men who would defy the power of superior strength, or envy and depreciate the superior gifts of genius, will do unbidden homage to the majesty of superior justice. "Mars is a tyrant," says Plutarch, in the epilogue of "Demetrius," "but justice is the rightful sovereign of the world." "The things which kings receive from heaven are not machines for taking towns, or ships with brazen beaks, but law and justice; these they are to guard and cultivate. And it is not the most warlike, the most violent and sanguinary, but the

justest of princes, whom Homer calls the disciple of Jupiter." History has more than once confirmed that test of supremacy. The reputation of incorruptible integrity alone has made poor princes, and even private citizens, the arbiters of nations.

King Hieron of Syracuse thus arbitrated the disputes of his warlike neighbors. Plato, Phocion, Philopoemen, Cato, and Abencerrage (Ibn Zerrag) settled international quarrels which the sword had failed to decide. The prestige of uprightness has made honor almost a synonyme of an "honorable," *i. e.*, honest, reputation. The commercial integrity of Hebrew merchants has overcome race-jealousies and religious prejudices, and in America the worship of wealth does not prevent an upright judge from ranking high above a wealthier, but less scrupulous, attorney.

The consciousness of a just cause is an advantage which, more than once, has outweighed a grievous disadvantage in wealth and power. It biased the fortune of war in the battles of Leuctra and Lodi; it enabled the Scythian herdsmen to annihilate the veterans of King Cyrus, and the Swiss peasants to rout the chivalry of Austria and Burgundy. A just cause enlists sympathy, and, as a bond of union, surpasses the value of common interests, which a slight change of circumstances is apt to turn into conflicting interests and disagreement. Strict adherence to the principles of political equity has preserved small states in the midst of powerful neighbors, whose greed of conquest is restrained by their hesitation to incur the odium of wanton aggression. Belgium,

Holland, and Denmark have thus preserved their national independence in Europe, as Japan and Acheen in the East. In Central Africa the honesty and simplicity of the agricultural Ethiopians has proved a match for the cunning of the predatory Moors, who constantly pillage their neighbors, but as constantly quarrel about the division of their spoils, and, in the vicissitudes of their civil wars, have again and again been obliged to purchase the alliance of the despised "heathen."

The practical advantages of integrity have been recognized in the proverbial wisdom of all nations, but are not confined to the affairs of commercial intercourse. In the long run, honesty is the "best policy," even in avocations where the perversion of justice may seem to promise a temporary advantage. A lawyer who refuses to defend a wealthy knave against a poor plaintiff will gain in self-respect, and ultimately also in professional reputation, more than he has lost in direct emoluments. A politician who refuses to resort to chicanes may miss the chance of a short-lived triumph, but will sow a seed of prestige sure to ripen its eventual harvest.

C.—PERVERSION.

Justice, in the pristine pagan sense of the word, was too natural and too manly a virtue to find much favor with the whining moralists of Antinaturalism. The truth which a modern philosopher has condensed in the sarcasm that "an honest god is the noblest work of man," was recognized already by the ancient historian who observed that "every nation makes its

gods the embodiments of its own ideals," though, happily, it is not always true that "no worshiper is better than the object of his worship." To some degree, however, the moral standards of the Mediterranean pagans were undoubtedly prejudiced by the lewd propensities of their Olympians, and it is equally certain that the extravagant injustice of Christian fanatics can be partly explained, as well as condoned, by the moral characteristics of their dogma-God. According to the accepted doctrine of the Middle Ages, the administrative principles of that God seemed to imply a degree of moral perversity which even the poetic license of a saner age would have hesitated to ascribe to a fiend. The same deity whom the creed of the Galilean church makes the omniscient creator of all the physical and moral instincts of human nature, nevertheless was supposed to punish with endless torture nearly every free gratification of those instincts, and demand a voluntary renunciation of a world which his own bounty had filled with every blessing, and adorned with every charm of loveliness. The God who endowed us with faculties of reason, of which a moderate share is sufficient to perceive the absurdities of the Christian dogma, nevertheless avenges the repudiation of that dogma as an "unpardonable sin against the authority of his sacred word." The most natural action, the eating of an apple, is made the pretext of the supposed fall of man, and of penalties affecting not only his progeny, but all his fellow-creatures, and even the lower products of organic Nature; while the greatest of all imaginable crimes, a Deicide, the cruel murder of a

god, is accepted as a basis of redemption. The doctrine of salvation by grace made the distribution of punishments and rewards a matter of mere caprice. The dogmatists of predestination distinctly taught that the "elect" were not saved by their own merits, but by an inscrutable, incalculable, and gratuitous act of divine favor, while others were as inevitably foredoomed to an eternity of woe. By faith alone, or by faith and the ceremony of immersion, the guilt of a sinful life could, withal, be cancelled in the eleventh hour, while the omission of that ceremony doomed even children, nay, newborn babes, to the abyss of hellfire. "There is no doubt," the Solomon of the Patristic Age assures us, "that infants, only a few spans in length, are crawling on the bottom of hell," a doctrine which the historian of Rationalism justly stigmatizes as "so atrocious, and at the same time so extravagantly absurd, that it would be simply impossible for the imagination to surpass its insanity." Yet for more than twelve hundred years Christians were in danger of being burnt at the stake for refusing to attribute such infamies to their creator.

D.—PENALTIES OF NEGLECT.

Need we wonder that the converts of that creed believed in the merit of passive submission to the caprices of earthly despots, and scorned the appeals of justice in their dealings with pagans and Free-thinkers? Why should men try to be better than their God? The worshiper of a God who doomed the souls of unbaptized children and honest dissenters, naturally had no hesitation in assailing the

bodies of their unbelieving fellow-men, and princes who loaded fawning sycophants with favors which they denied to honest patriots could appeal to the sanction of a divine precedent. Every petty "sovereign of six faithful square miles" accordingly became a law to himself. A man's might was the only measure of his right; the *Faust-Recht*, the "first law" of iron-clad bullies, reigned supreme from the Baltic to the Mediterranean, and the judges of (the only independent) ecclesiastic courts confined their attention to ferocious punishments of neglect in the payment of tithes, and the performance of sorage duties and ceremonies. The belief in the divine right of potentates, and passive submission to even the most outrageous abuse of that power, were assiduously inculcated as primary duties of a Christian citizen. Natural justice, civil rights, and the laws of humanity had no place in that code of revealed ethics.

Such teachings bore their fruit in the horrors of insurrection. In the Peasants' War thousands of convents and castles were rent as by the outburst of a hurricane, and their dwellers had to learn the inconvenience of having to submit to the powers that happened to be, by being torn limb from limb, or flayed and roasted alive.

"*Si no se obedecen los leyes, es ley que todo se pierde*," is the Spanish translation of an old Arabian proverb: "If justice is disregarded, it is just that everything perish"—a doom which the intolerable outrages against human rights and humanity at last experienced in the cataclysm of the French Revolu-

tion. There, too, the despisers of natural justice had to eat their own doctrine, the strongholds of absolutism that had withstood the tears of so many generations were swept away by a torrent of blood, and the priests and princes whose inhumanity had turned their serfs into wild beasts learned the significance of their mistake when their own throats were mangled by the fangs of those beasts.

The doctrine of salvation by grace had substituted favor and caprice for the rights of natural justice, and for a series of centuries the consequences of its teachings were seen in the treatment of nearly every benefactor of mankind. The prince who devoted the fruits of his conquests to the feeding of countless convent drones, let scholars starve and loaded the discoverer of a New World with chains. His successors who lavished the treasures of their vast empire on pimps and clerical mountebanks, let Cervantes perish in penury. The sovereign protector of a thousand stall-fed prelates refused to relieve the last distress of John Kepler. The moralists who thought it a grievance that the church should be denied the right of tithing the lands of southern Spain, had no pity for the sufferings of the men whose labor had made those lands blossom like the gardens of paradise, and who were exiled by thousands for the crime of preferring the unitary God of the Koran to the trinitary gods of the New Testament.

E.—REFORM.

The perversion of our moral standards by the dogmas of an antinatural creed is still glaringly evi-

dent in the prevailing notions of natural justice and the precedence of social duties. The modern Croesus who deems it incumbent on his duties as a citizen and a Christian to contribute an ample subvention to the support of an orthodox seminary, has no hesitation in swelling his already bloated income by reducing the wages of a hundred starving factory children and taking every sordid advantage in coining gain from the loss of helpless tenants and dependants. The pious Sabbatarians who doom their poor neighbors to an earthly Gehenna and premature death by depriving them of every chance for healthful recreation, lavish their luxuries and their endearments on the caged cutthroat who edifies his jailer by renouncing the vanities of this worldly sphere and ranting about the bliss of the New Jerusalem. The bank cashier who would never be pardoned for kicking the hind-parts of a mendicant missionary is readily absolved from the sin of such secular indiscretions as embezzling the savings of a few hundred widows and orphans.

Before resuming the rant about our solicitude for the interests of departed souls, we should learn to practice a little more common honesty in our dealings with the interests of our living fellow-men. Natural justice would be less frequently outraged if our moral reformers would distinctly repudiate the doctrines of vicarious atonement and salvation by faith, and hold every man responsible for his own actions, irrespective of his belief or disbelief in the claims of an Asiatic miracle-monger. And moreover, the exponents of Secularism should insist on a truth not

unknown to the moralists of antiquity, that habitual submission to injustice is a vice instead of a virtue, and that he who thinks it a merit to signalize his unworldliness by failing to assert his own rights encourages oppression and fraud and endangers the rights of his honest fellow-men.

CHAPTER XII.

TRUTH.

A.—LESSONS OF INSTINCT.

The enemies of Nature have for ages based the favorite arguments of their creed on the doctrine of Natural Depravity. According to the theories of that tenet the natural instincts of the human heart are wholly evil, and its every nobler impulse is due to the redeeming influence of theological education. The baseness of the "unregenerate soul" is their favorite antithesis of "holiness by grace;" and the best test of that dogma would be a comparison of the moral characteristics of a young child of Nature with the moral results of theological training. We need not adduce the extreme case of a child like Kaspar Hauser or the ape-nursed foundling of Baroda, whose propensities had been modeled in communion with solitude or the dumb denizens of the wilderness. For, even in the midst of "Christian civilization," thousands of peasants and mechanics are practically pure Agnostics, and ignore the absurdities of the New Testament as persistently as their deer-hunting ancestors ignored the absurdities

of pagan mythology. At the end of his sixth or seventh year the offspring of such parents would still represent a fair specimen-child of unregenerate Nature, and the normal bias of that Nature is revealed in the honesty, the trusting innocence, the purity, and the cheerfulness of the young Agnostic, and the absence of every appreciable germ of the secret vices, the rancorous spite, and the joy-hating bigotries of the representative Christian convent-slave.

But the most characteristic features of that contrast would perhaps be the double-tongued hypocrisy of the old Jesuit and the artless candor of the young peasant boy. The truthfulness of young children antedates all moral instruction. Its motives are wholly independent of theological, or even abstract-ethical, influences, and are based merely on a natural preference for the simplest way of dealing with the problems of intellectual communication. Truth is uniform, falsehood is complex. Truth is persistent and safe; falsehood is unstable, fragile, and precarious. Children instinctively recognize the difficulties of plausibly maintaining the fictions of deceit, and dread the risk of incurring the suspicion of habitual insincerity. Hence their uncompromising loyalty to facts; their innocence of artifice and mental reservation; hence also their extreme reluctance in conforming to the conventional customs of social hypocrisy and polite prevarication.

"Are you not glad Mrs. D. is gone?" Master Frank once asked his mother in my presence. "Well, yes, I am." "Then what's the use asking her to call

again and stay for supper? She could not help seeing that we were tired of her gabble." "Well, it wouldn't do to insult her, you know." "Oh, no, but what's the use telling her something she cannot believe?"

That last remark, especially, recurs to my memory whenever the expedience of hypocrisy is defended by the conventional sophisms of Christian civilization. That prevarications are unprofitable as well as unpardonable is a truth which Jesuitry has shrouded with a veil of its choicest cant, but the clear vision of childhood penetrates that cant, and the "natural depravity" of unregenerate souls may reach the degree of doubting the merit of simulation even in the interest of an orthodox creed, as the reverend dogmatist might ascertain by happening to overhear the recess comments of our American Sabbath-school youngsters.

B.—REWARDS OF CONFORMITY.

The Utilitarians hold that motives of enlightened self-interest would be sufficient to make a man perfectly virtuous. With the conventional definition of "virtue," that tenet might require certain qualifications; but it is more than probable that perfect prudence would insure a voluntary devotion to perfect truthfulness. In its most aggressive form the hatred of falsehood may imperil the temporary interests of the aggressor, but in every other sense the path of truth is the path of safety. All the ultimate tendencies of the moral and physical universe conspire to vindicate truth and discredit fraud.

Assertions based on fact stand erect, upheld by the evidence of experience as an upright building by the law of gravity ; deception, with all its props of plausible sophisms, is tottering like a wall out of plumb, or a rotten tree upheld by artificial supports which in their turn must yield to the test of time.

Even from a standpoint of purely secular considerations, truth, like honesty, is in the long run the best policy. Abstinence from insidious poisons is easier than temperance, and the lessons of experience have at all times convinced the most clear-sighted of our fellow-men that consistent abstinence from the vice of hypocrisy is preferable to any compromise with the interests of imposture. The non-clerical, and almost Agnostic, education of the American wilderness seems to favor that type of moral teetotalism, and among the hardy hill-farmers of our New England highlands, and Southern mountain states, one may find men almost constitutionally incapable of conscious deceit in deed or word, and practicing veracity without the least pretense to superior saintliness, in a quite untheological and often, indeed, decidedly profane medium of speech. They stick to truth from habit, rather than from moral principles, yet among their simple-hearted neighbors they enjoy a respect withheld from unctuous hypocrisy, and in emergencies can always rely on the practical value of a life-long reputation for candor. Their word is sufficient security ; their denial of slanderous imputations is accepted without the aid of compurgators.

The simple religion of Mohammed has favored the development of a similar disposition, and on the

Austrian-Turkish frontier the word of a Mussulman generally carries the weight of a casting vote. On the Indian ocean, too, the verdict of international opinion favors a preference for Unitarian testimony. "Wish to heaven we could fall in with some Acheen fishermen," Captain Baudissin heard his pilot mutter among the reefs of the Sunda Islands, "it's no use asking such d—— liars as those Hindoos and Chinese."

The love of truth compels the respect even of impostors and of professional hypocrits, as in the case of that curate mentioned by the German Freethinker, Weber (author of the philosophical cyclopedia, "Democritus"). Professor Weber passed his last years in the retirement of a small south-German mountain village, where his undisguised skepticism made him the bugbear of the local pharisees; yet on moonless evenings he was more than once honored by the visits of a neighboring village priest, who risked censure, and, perhaps, excommunication, for the sake of enjoying the luxury of a respite from the sickening cant of his colleagues, and devoting a few hours to intellectual communion with a champion of Secular science.

Lessing's allegory of "Nathan" is founded on something more than fiction, and there is no doubt that even in the midnight of the Middle Ages the gloomy misery of the Hebrew pariahs was often cheered by the secret visits of some intelligent Christian whom the thirst for truth impelled to defy the vigilance of the heretic-hunter, and to prefer an intellectual symposium in the garret of a Jewish slum

alley to a feast in the banquet hall of a Christian prelate.

"It is lucky for you that your opponents have not learned to utilize the advantage of truth," Mirabeau replied to the taunt of an insolent Jesuit; and in logic that advantage can, indeed, hardly be overrated. "They find believers who themselves believe," and, as the philosopher Colton observes, a sort of instinct often enables the simplest countryman to distinguish the language of honest conviction from the language of artful sophistry. "Our jurymen seem to appreciate a first-class lie only from an artistic standpoint," confessed a lawyer of my acquaintance, "for some of them privately hinted that they could tell it every time."

Others, no doubt, lack that degree of acumen; but first-class orators, as well as first-class authors, have always recognized the wisdom of not relying on such mental defects of the public. Charles Darwin's works, for instance, owe their popularity to their erudition and their grace of style, hardly more than to the absolute candor of the author, who reviews the evidence for and against his theories with the fairness of a conscientious judge, and by that very impartiality has succeeded in prevailing against the partisan arguments of his adversaries. For similar reasons our "Christian" temperance societies can date their triumphs only from the time when they frankly repudiated the sophisms of their predecessors, who hoped to reconcile the lessons of science with the teachings of the alcohol-brewing Galilean. For truth

prevails against half-truth, as well as against absolute untruth.

C.—PERVERSION.

Since the dawn of rationalism perhaps no other literary product of Freethought has provoked the enemies of Nature to that degree of rancorous fury excited by the appearance of Moliere's "Tartuffe." The hero of that famous drama is an old pharisee whose resolve to renounce the "vanities of earth" is constantly tripped by the promptings of his physical instincts, and who resorts to all kinds of ludicrous sophisms to palliate the antagonism of two ever irreconcilable principles:

Le ciel défend, de vrai, certain contentements,
Mais on trouve avec lui des accommodements—

and the drama never failed to attract a jubilant audience; but the French priesthood moved heaven and earth to stop the performance, and can, indeed, hardly be blamed for rejecting the apologies of the author's friends; for the irony of Tartuffe ridicules the shams, not only of the Catholic clergy, but of their creed and the creed of their Protestant colleagues: it is, in fact, a scathing satire on the absurdities of Christian Antinaturalism. The impossibility of reconciling the demands of Nature with the precepts of a world-renouncing fanatic has, indeed, made the worship of that fanatic a systematic school of hypocrisy and subverted the moral health of its victims as effectually as the unnatural restraints of convent life subverted the basis of physical health.

God is paid when man receiveth;
To enjoy is to obey;

says Nature with the poet of reason. "God delights in the self-torture of his creatures—crucify your flesh, despise your body, disown the world; renounce! renounce!" croaks the chorus of Christian dogmatists, and can silence protest only by turning health into disease or candor into hypocrisy.

The dogma of salvation by faith offers an additional premium on mental prostitution. By punishing honest doubt as a crime and inculcating the merit of blind submission to the authority of reason-insulting doctrines, the defenders of those doctrines struck a deadly blow at the instinct of free inquiry, and for a series of generations actually succeeded in eradicating that instinct from the mental constitution of their victims.

"The persecutor," says W. H. Lecky, "can never be certain that he is not persecuting truth rather than error, but he may be quite certain that he is suppressing the spirit of truth. And, indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that the doctrines I have reviewed represent the most skilful and at the same time most successful conspiracy against that spirit that has ever existed among mankind. Until the seventeenth century, every mental disposition which philosophy pronounces to be essential to a legitimate research was almost uniformly branded as a sin, and a large proportion of the most deadly intellectual vices were deliberately inculcated as virtues. . . . In a word, there is scarcely a disposition that marks the love of abstract truth and scarcely a rule which

reason teaches as essential for its attainment that theologians did not for ages stigmatize as offensive to the Almighty."

And those perversions culminated in the miracle-mongery of the wretched superstition. If the material universe was at the mercy of witches and tricky demons, no man could for a moment trust the evidence of his own senses and was naturally driven to complete his mental degradation by an absolute surrender of common sense to dogma. The history of Christian dogmatism is the history of an eighteen hundred years' war against Nature and Truth.

D.—PENALTIES OF NEGLECT.

The drift sand of the deserts covering the site of once fertile empires still attests the physical consequences of a thousand years' reign of Antinaturalism, but, happily, the time has already come when many of our fellow-men almost fail to credit the degree of mental abasement realized during the most orthodox centuries of that reign. It would be no overstatement to say that for nearly six hundred years the priests of the Galilean miracle-monger persuaded a plurality of the Caucasian nations to risk their lives in defense of dogmas the mere profession of which would start a modern Christian on a galloping trip to the next lunatic asylum.

Decapitated saints were believed to have emerged from their tombs and paid their respects to a newly appointed bishop; flying dragons descended through the air to snatch the bodies of unbelievers and disappeared with screams that frightened orthodox

neighbors to take refuge in their cellar-holes; swarms of angels carried bones, crosses, and whole buildings from Bethlehem to Loretto; King Philip the Second paid a thousand doubloons for a skeleton of St. Laurentius, and having been informed that a complete skeleton of the same saint was for sale in the south of Italy, he at once ratified the bargain and blessed heaven for having favored him with a duplicate of the precious relic. Thousands of unfortunates were tried and executed on a charge of having taken an aerial excursion on a broomstick or a black he-goat; of having caused a gale by churning a potful of froth and water; of having turned themselves into foxes, wolves, and tomcats.

The instinct of recognizing the absurdity of even the most glaring superstitions seems to have become wholly extinct in the minds of the forty generations from the middle of the tenth to the end of the fourteenth century; and during that millennium of madness the suppression of free inquiry encouraged thousands of pious tract-mongers to devote their lives to the wholesale forgery of saintly biographies and miracle legends, and disseminate under the name of historical records insanities too extravagant even for the readers of a modern nursery-tale.

The war against Truth was carried to the length of suppressing not only the skeptical inferences of science, but science itself; chemists, astronomers, physiologists, mathematicians, and *bona fide* historians could pursue their inquiries only at the risk of an inquisitorial indictment; and a cloud of ignorance, which in the days of Horace and Pliny would

have been thought disgraceful to the obscurest hamlet of the Roman empire, brooded for ages over the face of the entire Christian world.

For a series of centuries the encouragement of credulity and imposture almost annulled the value of contemporary records. Travelers and chroniclers, as well as biographers, accommodated the popular taste by dealing, not in marvels only, but in miracles; witchcraft anecdotes, preternatural resurrections, prodigies of skill and physical prowess, giants, dragons, were-wolves, and no end of spectral manifestations. It is no exaggeration to say that for a period of more than nine hundred years the dogma of the Galilean antinaturalist systematically favored *the survival of the unfit*, by offering a premium on mental prostitution and making common sense a capital crime.

E.—REFORM.

The triumph of the Protestant revolt has ushered in a dawn which, in comparison with the preceding night, may justly vaunt its era as an Age of Reason; but the thousand years' perversion of our moral instincts has not been wholly redeemed by the educational influences of a short century. For even eighty years ago the educational reforms of the Protestant nations attempted little more than a compromise between reason and dogma, while their southern neighbors revolted against the political influence, rather than against the dogmatical arrogance, of their priesthood. Nay, even at present the fallacies of the compromise plan still hamper the

progress of reform in manifold directions. As an American Freethinker aptly expresses it: "Truth is no longer kept under lock and key, but is kindly turned loose to roam at large—after being chained to a certain number of theological cannon-balls." Evolution may pursue its inquiries into specific phases of organic development, but must not question the correctness of the Mosaic traditions; rationalists may inveigh against the insanities of the Middle Ages, but must pretend to overlook the fact that the doctrine of the New Testament contains the germs of all those insanities; the science of health may denounce modern fallacies, but must beware to mention the anti-physical precepts of the body-despising Galilean; Materialists must attack the hobgoblins of the Davenport brothers, but ignore the hog-goblins of Gadara; historical critics may call attention to the inconsistencies of Livy and Plutarch, but must not mention the self-contradictions of the New Testament.

Yet logic and philosophy will be little more than a farce till the axiom of a great biologist can be applied to the pursuit of every human science. "Inquiries of that sort" (the "Descent of Man"), he says, "have nothing whatever to do with personal tastes or vested interests, but only with facts. We should not ask: 'Will it be popular?' 'Will it seem orthodox?' but simply, 'Is it true?'"

And in just as much as the theory of moral duties deserves the name of a science, the exponents of that science would gain, rather than lose, by the adoption of the same maxim. "Religion," in the traditional sense of the word, needs to be purged from an enor-

mous percentage of spurious elements, before its ministers can be acquitted from the guilt of tempting their disciples to associate the ideas of Ethics and Imposture, and thus reject the basis of morality together with the basis of an Asiatic myth. "Truth is the beginning of Wisdom," "Justice is Truth," "Mendacity is the Mother of Discord," would be fit mottoes for the ethical Sunday-schools of the Future. "What is Truth?" asks Pilate; yet even in religious controversies the fury of sectarian strife could be obviated if we would truthfully admit the uselessness of disputes about the *unknowable* mysteries of supernatural problems. Still, we cannot hope to eradicate the roots of discord unless we resolve with equal frankness to reject the interference of Supernaturalism with the *knowable* problems of secular science. Evident Truth can dispense with the indorsement of miracle-mongers, and "evident Untruth," in the words of Ulrich Hutten, "should be exposed whether its teachers come in the name of God or of the devil."

CHAPTER XIII.

HUMANITY.

A.—LESSONS OF INSTINCT.

The wanton disposition of young children, like the mischievousness of our next relatives, the tree-climbing half-men of the tropical forests, has often been mistaken for natural malevolence, but is rather due to an excess of misdirected vital energy. In seeking a vent for the exuberance of that energy, a frolic-

some child, like a playful monkey, is apt to become destructive, merely because destruction is easier than construction. Mischievousness, in the sense of cruelty and gratuitous malice, is, however, by no means a prominent character-trait of monkeys or normal boys. The most wayward of all known species of fourhandlers are undoubtedly the African baboons; yet a long study of their natural disposition, both in freedom and captivity, has convinced me that even their fits of passionate wrath stop short of actual cruelty, and are, in fact, almost invariably intended as a *protest* against acts of injustice or violence. At Sidi Ramath, Algiers, I saw a number of *babuinos* hasten to the aid of a shrieking child, who had hurt his hand in the gear of an ox-cart, and whose cries they evidently attributed to the brutality of his companions. The sight of a wounded fellow-creature, a crippled rat, a mangled bird, a dying rabbit, never fails to throw my pet Chacma-baboon into a paroxysm of shrieking excitement, and within reach of her chain she will act upon the impulse of compassion by trying to redress the injuries of her playmates or rescuing the victim of a dog-fight. The fierce mandril, with resources of self-defense that would defy the attack of a panther, is nevertheless so averse to an aggressive exertion of that strength that menagerie-keepers can trust him to spare, if not protect, the smallest species of his distant relatives, as well as such petulant fellow-captives as young dogs and raccoons. The hunters of the Orinoco Valley can attract fourhandlers of all species by imitating the peculiar long-drawn wail of a young

capuchin-monkey. At the sound of that cry spider-monkeys, stentors, and tamarins will hasten up from all parts of the forest, attracted less by curiosity than the evident desire to succor a distressed fellow-creature.

That instinct of compassion still manifests itself in the disposition of children and primitive nations. I have seen youngsters of five or six years gasp in anguish at sight of a dying dog, or turn with horror from the bloody scenes of a butcher-shop. Sir Henry Stamford describes the frantic excitement of a Hindoo village at the discovery of a number of buckshot-riddled hanuman apes; and that sympathy is not limited to the nearest relatives of the human species, for in the suburbs of Benares the gardener of a British resident was pursued with howls and execrations for having killed a young *Roussette*—some sort of frugivorous bat. The mob repeatedly cornered the malefactor, and with shrieks of indignation shook the mangled creature before his face. The traveler Busbequius mentions a riot in a Turkish hamlet where a Christian boy came near being mobbed for “gagging a long-billed fowl.”

“Man’s inhumanity to man,” as practiced by their foreign visitors, inspired the South Sea Islanders with a nameless horror. A sailor of the British ship *Endeavor* having been sentenced to be punished for some act of rudeness toward the natives of the Society Islands, the natives themselves interceded with loud cries for mercy, and seemed, indeed, to settle their own quarrels by arbitration, or, at worst, boy-fashion, by wrestling and pummeling each other, and

then shaking hands again. A similar scene was witnessed in Prince Baryatinski's camp in the eastern Caucasus, where a poor mountaineer offered to renounce his claim to a number of stolen sheep, rather than see the thief subjected to the barbarous penalties of a Russian court-martial. In Mandingo Land Mungo Park was mistaken for a Portuguese slave-trader, nevertheless the pity of his destitute condition gradually overcame the hostility of the natives; so much, indeed, that they volunteered to relieve his wants by joint contributions from their own rather scanty store of comestibles. Even among the bigoted peasants of northern Italy the butcheries of the Holy Inquisition at first provoked a fierce insurrection in favor of the condemned heretics. In India and Siam some two hundred million of our fellow-men are so unable to overcome their horror of bloodshed that in time of famine they have frequently preferred to starve to death rather than satisfy their hunger by the slaughter of a fellow-creature.

A diet of flesh food has, indeed, a decided influence in developing those truculent propensities which our moralists have often been misled to ascribe to the promptings of a normal instinct. In our North American Indians, for instance, a nearly exclusively carnivorous diet has engendered all the propensities of a carnivorous beast; but the next relatives of those sanguinary nomads, the agricultural *Indios* of Mexico and Central America, are about as mild-natured as their Hindostan fellow-vegetarians, while Science and tradition agree in contrasting the customs of flesh-eating hunters and herders with the

frugal habits of our earliest ancestors. The primitive instincts of the human soul are clearly averse to cruelty.

B.—REWARDS OF CONFORMITY.

The apologists of Supernaturalism have frequently insisted on the distinction between naturally advantageous and naturally thankless virtues. Under the former head they would, for instance, include Temperance and Perseverance; under the latter, charity and the love of enemies—thus arguing for the necessity of assuming an *other-worldly* chance of recompense for the unselfish merits of a true saint.

But a humane disposition is, on the whole, quite natural enough to dispense with the promise of preternatural rewards. Good-will begets good-will; benevolence is the basis of friendship, while malice begets ill-will, and is apt to betray its claws in spite of the soft-gloved disguise of polite formalities.

A humane master is better served than a merciless despot; his dependants identify his interests with their own; his family, his tenants, his very cattle, thrive as in an atmosphere of sunshine, while habitual unkindness blights every blessing and cancels all merits. Mental ability seems rather to aggravate the odium of a cruel disposition, while, on the other hand, we are almost ashamed to notice the mental or physical shortcomings of a kind-hearted man. Intellectual attainments have never reconciled the world to the demerits of a spiteful despot. Tiberius, the most abhorred of all the imperial monsters of tyrant-ridden Rome, was, next to Julian,

mentally perhaps the most gifted of Caesar's successors. Philip the Second was the most astute, as well as the most powerful, sovereign of his century, but his cold-blooded inhumanity prevented him from ever becoming a popular hero. Henry the Eighth's services to the cause of Protestantism did not save him from the execrations of his Protestant subjects. Pedro el Cruel was probably the most enlightened man of his nation, a friend of science in an age of universal ignorance, a protector of Jews and Moriscoes in an age of universal bigotry. But his delight in refinements of cruelty made him so hateful that at the first opportunity his Trinitarian and Unitarian subjects joined in a revolt which the tyrant tried in vain to appease by promises of the most liberal reforms.

Tolerance, properly speaking, is nothing but common humanity, applied to the settlement of religious controversies; the essential principle of civilization is humanity applied to the daily commerce of neighbors and neighboring nations. Superior humanity alone has founded the prestige of more than one potentially inferior nation.

A benevolent disposition, moreover, finds its own reward in the fact that the order of the visible universe is, in the main, founded on a benevolent plan. The system of Nature, with all the apparent ferocity of her destructive moods, tends on the whole to insure the greatest possible happiness of the greatest possible number, and the natural inclination of the benevolent man is therefore in sympathy, as it were,

with the current of cosmic tendencies; his mind is in tune with the harmony of Nature.

C.—PERVERSION.

The unparalleled inhumanities of the medieval bigots seem to form a strange contrast with the alleged humanitarian precepts of the Galilean prophet, but were nevertheless the inevitable consequence of a doctrine aimed at the suppression of the natural instincts of the human soul. "Whatever is pleasant is wrong," was the shibboleth of a creed that has been justly defined as a "worship of sorrow," and the practice of the self-denying virtues was valued chiefly in proportion to their *afflictiveness*. Herbert Spencer, in his "Data of Ethics," has demonstrated with absolutely conclusive logic that the universal practice of *altruism* (*i.e.*, the subordination of personal to alien interests) would lead to social bankruptcy, but the clear recognition of that result would have been only an additional motive in recommending its promotion to the world-renouncing fanaticism of the Galilean Buddhist. Secular advantages were more than foreign to the purposes of his reform. "Divest yourself of your earthly possessions," was the sum of his advice to salvation-seeking inquirers. "Renounce! renounce!"—not in order to benefit your worldly-minded neighbor, but to mortify your own worldliness. Abandon the path of earthly happiness—not in order to make room for the crowding multitude, but in order to guide your own steps into the path of other-worldliness. Disinterestedness, in the Christian sense, meant the renunciation of all

earthly interests whatever; and the same moralist who commands his disciple to love his enemies also bids him *hate* his father, mother, sister, brother, and friends.

"Seek everything that can alienate you from the love of earth; avoid everything that can rekindle that love," would be at once the *rationale* and the summary of the Galilean doctrine. Shun pleasure, welcome sorrow; hate your friends, love your enemies. It might seem as if precepts of that sort were in no danger of being followed too literally. We can love only lovely things. We cannot help finding hatefulness hateful. We cannot relish bitterness. We might as well be told to still our hunger with icicles or cool our thirst with fire. But even in its ultimate tendencies the religion of Antinaturalism was anything but a religion of love. The suppression of physical enjoyments, the war against freedom, against health and reason, was not apt to increase the sum of earthly happiness; and the sense of tolerance—nay, the instinct of common humanity and justice—was systematically blunted by the worship of a god to whom our ancestors for thirty generations were taught to ascribe what Feuerbach justly calls "a monstrous system of favoritism: arbitrary grace for a few children of luck, and millions foredoomed to eternal damnation." "The exponents of that dogma," says Lecky, "attributed to the creator acts of injustice and barbarity which it would be absolutely impossible for the imagination to surpass, acts before which the most monstrous excesses of human cruelty dwindle into insignificance,

acts which are, in fact, considerably worse than any that theologians have attributed to the devil."

D.—PENALTIES OF NEGLECT.

The Millennium of Madness, as a modern Free-thinker calls the thousand years' reign of the Galilean superstition, might with equal justice be called the Age of Inhumanity. "The greatest possible misery of the greatest possible number" seems to have been the motto of the medieval dogmatists, and, short of any plan involving the total destruction of the human race, it seems, indeed, not easy to imagine a more effective system for crowding the greatest conceivable amount of suffering into a given space of time. In the pursuit of their chimeras fanatics have never shrunk from sacrificing the happiness of their fellow-men; class interests have made patricians callous to the sufferings of the poor, and revolted pariahs to the fate of the rich, and in the party warfare of antiquity cruelty was merely a means for the attainment of enlarged opportunities of enjoyment. But to the maniacs of the Middle Ages inhumanity seems to have become an end as well as a means. They inflicted misery for its own sake; they waged a persistent war against happiness itself, and their sect-founders vied in the suppression of sympathy with every natural instinct of the human heart. "If any sect," says Ludwig Boerne, "should ever take it into their heads to worship the devil in his distinctive qualities, and devote themselves to the promotion of human misery in all its forms, the

catechism of such a religion could be found ready-made in the code of several monastic colleges."

Dissenters were murdered, and converts, under the full control of their spiritual taskmasters, were doomed to a slower, but hardly less cruel, death by wearing out their lives with penance and renunciation.

"According to that code," says Henry Buckle, "all the natural affections, all social pleasures, all amusements, and all the joyous instincts of the human heart were sinful. . . . The clergy looked on all comforts as sinful in themselves, merely because they were comforts. The great object of life was to be in a state of constant affliction. Whatever pleased the senses was to be suspected. It mattered not what a man liked; the mere fact of his liking it made it sinful. Whatever was natural was wrong."

The dogma of salvation by faith seemed to make the enforced propagation of that faith a sacred duty, and soon drenched the face of the earth with the blood of pagans and dissenters; the worship of sorrow drove thousands to devote themselves and their children to a life of perpetual penance; and the insanities of the hideous superstition culminated in that dogma of eternal hell tortures that deprived its converts of the last solace of nature, and barred the last gate of escape from the horrors of existence.

E.—REFORM.

The skeptic Holbach, and several of his philosophical friends, directed the keenest shafts of their logic against the doctrine of eternal punishment, and never

wearied of repeating that the belief in a merciless God naturally tends to fill the world with merciless bigots. "How insignificant," they argued, "the occasional sufferings of a transient life on earth must appear to the converts of John Calvin, who held that about nine-tenths of the human race are foredoomed to an eternity of nameless and hopeless tortures. How absurd they must deem the complaints of a life-weary wretch, who, ten to one, will soon look back to the comparative bliss of that life as to the happiness of a lost Eden." The Universalists are fond of enlarging on the moral of that theme, yet from a wider point of view their objections might be extended to the entire doctrine of *other-worldliness*, since Holbach's argument might find its exact analogue in the dogma of *post mortem* compensation. "His soul will be the gainer," thought the Crusader who had demonstrated the dangers of unbelief by smashing a Moorish skull, "and if he should die his spirit will enter the gates of the New Jerusalem." "Oh, the ingratitude," actually said a priest of the Spanish-American land robbers, "the ingratitude of the wretches who grudge us the territories of their base earthly kingdoms and forget that our gospel offers them a passport to the glorious kingdom of heaven!" "The ingratitude!" repeats the modern pharisee, "the base ingratitude of those factory children who grudge me the privileges of my position, and clamor for an increase of wages to gratify their worldly desires. Consumption? Hunger? Frost? should not the rich promises of the gospel compensate such temporal inconveniences, and have I not founded a

Sabbath-school to save them from the lusts of their unregenerate souls?"

Only a few months ago a Chinese philosopher acquainted us with the verdict of his countrymen on the "gospel of love" that sends its missionaries on ships loaded with brandy and opium, and escorted by armadas for the demolition of seaports that might refuse to admit the cargo of spirituous and spiritual poisons.

Secularism, the religion of Nature, should teach our brethren that their highest physical and their highest moral welfare can be only conjointly attained, and that cramping misery stunts the soul, as well as the body of its victim. It should preach the *solidarity* of human interests which prevents the oppressor from enjoying the fruits of his inhumanity, and makes the curses of his dependents, nay, even the mute misery of his starving cattle, react on the happiness of a cruel master. It should expose the business methods of the humanitarians who propose to silence the clamors of their famished brethren with consecrated wafers and drafts on the bank of the New Jerusalem.

The Christian duty of transferring our love from our friends to our enemies may be one of those virtues that have to await their recompense in a mysterious hereafter, but natural humanity can hope to find its reward on this side of the grave.

CHAPTER XIV.

FRIENDSHIP.

A.—LESSONS OF INSTINCT.

Philosophers of the utilitarian school have begun to reestablish the long-forgotten truth that Materialism is the indispensable root of the plant which bears its flowers in spiritual aspirations. The consequence of universal practice is the best test of a dogma, and if all men were to divest themselves of their earthly possessions and devote their lives to the hyperphysical vagaries of the Galilean messiah, there would soon be neither crops to harvest nor bread to eat, and unworldly saints would starve as surely as ungodly sinners. "Ideality" may be the crown of the brain, as the brain is of the body, but the organs of the mind cannot dispense with the aid of the alimentary organs; the pinnacle of the social fabric needs intermediate supports. Education has to secure the welfare of the body before it can successfully cultivate the faculties of the mind; and it is not less certain that a man has to be a good patriot before he can be a worthy cosmopolitan, and a good friend before he can be a good patriot.

In the progress of individual development the instinct of friendship asserts itself at a very early period. Its recollection hallows the memory of the poorest childhood. The shepherd-boys of the upper Alps travel dozens of miles over cliffs and rocks to meet their friends at a salt-spring; on the shores of the Baltic the boys of the lonely fishermen's cabins

frequent their trysting-places in spite of wind and weather. Early friendships throw the charm of their poetry even over the dreary *prosa* of grammar-school life; the fellowship of school-friends forever endears the scenes of their sports and rambles, and for many a poor office-drudge the recollection of such hours "holds all the light that shone on the earth for him." True friendship smoothenes the rough path of poverty, while friendlessness, even in the gilded halls of wealth, is almost a synonyme of cheerlessness:

Ich wüsste mir keine groessre Pein,
Als wär' ich im Paradies allein,

says Goethe. "To be alone in paradise would be the height of misery." Friendship will assert itself athwart the barriers of social inequality, and its germs are so deeply rooted in the instincts of primitive nature that, in default of a communion of kindred souls, the bonds of sympathy have often united saints and sinners, nay, even men and brutes. The traditions of Grecian antiquity have preserved the possibly apocryphal legend of a dolphin that became attached to the company of a young fisherman, and after his death left the sea in search of its friend, and thus perished; but the story of Androcles was confirmed by the experience of Chevalier Geoffroy de la Tour, a crusader of the thirteenth century, who was charmed, but finally distressed, by the affection of a pet lion that followed him like his shadow, and at last fell a victim to his attachment by trying to swim after the ship that conveyed his master from Damascus to Genoa. The traveler Bus-

bequius mentions a lynx that set his heart on escorting a camp-follower of a Turkish pasha ; and Sir Walter Scott vouches for the touching episode of the Grampian Highlands, where a young hunter met his death by falling from a steep cliff, and was found, months after, half covered by the body of his favorite deerhound, who had followed his friend to the happy hunting-grounds by starving to death at the feet of a corpse.

Among the ancestors of the Mediterranean nations the betrayal of a friend was deemed an act of almost inconceivable infamy ; friends and friends engaged in a pledge of mutual hospitality, which was held sacred even in times of war ; and among the natives of the South Sea Islands a similar brotherhood of elective affinities existed in the society of the *Aroyi*, or oath-friends, who held all property in common, and in times of danger unhesitatingly risked their own lives in defense of their ally's. Professor Letourneau has collected many curious anecdotes of that devotion, which should leave no doubt that *altruism* in its noblest form can dispense with the hope of *post-mortem* compensation, and, indeed, with all theological motives whatever.

B.—REWARDS OF CONFORMITY.

Unselfishness is the soul of true friendship, yet it nevertheless remains true that all instincts are founded on the experience of benefits or injuries. During the rough transition period from beasthood to manhood, when our uncivilized ancestors roamed the forests of the foreworld, it must have been an

incalculable advantage to the individual hunter or herder to secure the coöperation of a trusty companion, whose watchful eye would double his chance of finding food or avoiding danger, whose stout arm might parry a blow which unaided strength would have failed to avert. As in other circumstances of natural selection, those who most successfully availed themselves of such advantages had a superior chance of survival and consequently of transmitting their disposition to subsequent generations, and the habit of friendship thus became a hereditary instinct.

The social system of civilized life has since devised manifold substitutes for the coöperation of elective affinities, but various unalienable advantages of the primitive plan have been more or less clearly recognized by all nations, especially by the manful and nature-abiding nations of pagan antiquity. The benefits secured by the mutual aid of sympathizing friends are not limited to the guarantee of civil rights, but extend to the realization of individual hopes and the indulgence of personal inclination and predilections, as well as to the higher privileges of a mental communion for which the panders of selfish wealth have as yet devised no equivalent. The power of *approbativeness*, the main stimulus of ambition, is infinitely intensified by the emulation of noble friendship, which, in the words of an ancient philosopher, "inspires to deeds heroic, and makes labor worth the toils that lead to success." Such friendship inspired the heroism of Theseus and Pyrrhus, of Harmodius and Aristogiton, of Nisus and Euryalus, and recorded its experience in proverbs which have few parallels in

the languages of the Christianized nations: "*Solem e mundo qui amicitiam e vita tollunt*"—"They deprive the world of sunshine who deprive life of friendship." "*Amicum perdere damnorum est maximum*"—"To lose a friend is the greatest of losses." "*Amicus magis necessarius quam ignis aut aqua*"—"A friend is more needful than fire or water."

In times of tribulation, when the fury of party-strife overrode all other restraints, friendship has more than once proved its saving power by averting otherwise hopeless perils. Diagoras was thus saved from the rage of allied bigots, Demetrius from the dagger of a wily assassin, the elder Cato from the rancor of political rivals. Without the aid of a friend Cicero would never have survived the intrigues of Catiline. Epaminondas made the approval of friends the sole reward of his heroic life, and vanquished the enemies of his country by the enthusiasm of the "sacred legion" of mutually devoted and mutually inspiring friends. Mohammed the Second yielded to the prayer of a humble companion what he refused to the united threats of foreign ambassadors, and Simon Bolivar, the liberator of South America, often confessed that he owed his triumphs to the counsel of private friends rather than to the suggestions of his official advisers.

C.—PERVERSION.

The blessing of friendship, "doubling the joys of life and lessening its sorrows," could not fail to be specially obnoxious to the moralists of a creed that seeks to lure its converts from earth to ghostland,

and depreciates the natural affections of the human heart. The gloomy antinaturalism of the Galilean prophet has been glossed over by the whitewashing committee of the revised Bible, but is too shockingly evident in the less sophisticated version of the original text to mistake its identity with the moral nihilism of the world-renouncing Buddha. The *philadelphia*, or "brother-love," of the New Testament, is, in fact, merely a "fellowship in Christ"—the spiritual communion and mutual indoctrination of earth-renouncing bigots. With the joys and sorrows of natural friendship their prophet evinces no sympathy whatever. "I am come," says he, "to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, . . . and a man's foes shall be those of his own household." "He who hates not his father and mother, his brothers and sisters, cannot be my disciple." "And the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son."

By that test of moral merit the obligation of natural affection counted as nothing compared with the duty of theological conformity. "Verily, I say unto you, there is no man that has left brethren or sisters or father and mother for my sake and the gospels', but he shall receive a hundredfold," etc. "He that loveth father and mother more than me is not worthy of me." "And another of his disciples said unto him: Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. But Jesus said unto him: Follow me, and let the dead bury their dead." "For if you love them which love you, what reward have ye?"

D.—PENALTIES OF NEGLECT.

The conversion of Rome, which theologians are fond of representing as the crowning miracle of Christianity, was a natural consequence of its pessimistic tendencies, which could not fail to recommend themselves to the instincts of a decrepit generation. "Worn-out sensualists consoled themselves with the hope of a better hereafter. Cowards pleased themselves with the idea of fulfilling the duty of meek submission to the injustice of the 'powers that be.' Monastic drones denounced the worldliness of industrial enterprises. Physical indolence welcomed the discovery that 'bodily exercise profiteth but little.' Envious impotence insisted on the duty of self-abasement. Transgressors against the health-laws of Nature relied upon the efficacy of the prayer-cure. Stall-fed priests sneered at the lean philosopher who wasted his time upon laborious inquiries, while he might wax fat on faith and the sacrifices of the pious. The demon-dogma was a godsend to the spiritual poverty of the elect. The so-called scholars of the Galilean church, who could not encounter the pagan philosophers on their own ground, found it very convenient to postulate a spook for every unknown phenomenon. . . . Despots before long recognized the mistake of persecuting a creed which inculcated the duty of passive submission to oppressors" (Secret of the East, p. 54).

They also recognized the advantage of a spiritual excuse for the infamy of their ingratitude to the secular benefactors of mankind. Cæsar and Trajan

treated the humblest centurion as a friend rather than as a servant. Constantine and Justinian treated the ablest ministers like slaves who can be forced to toil, and turned out to starve after having worn out their strength in the service of the Lord's anointed. Belisarius, after repeatedly saving his master from well-deserved ruin, was sacrificed to the spite of a crowned harlot, and left to beg his bread in the streets of the city which his valor alone had for years protected from the rage of hostile armies. Aetius, who had saved all Europe by stemming the torrent of Hunnish conquest, was treated like a rebellious slave for refusing to betray his brave allies, and the stipulated pay of his veterans was squandered on pimps and clerical parasites. Charles Martel, whose heroism turned the scales against the power of the invading Moriscoes, was openly reviled by the very priests who owed him the preservation of their lives, as well as of their livings; his image was dragged in the mire, his soul consigned to the pit of torment—all for having defrayed the costs of his campaign by tithing prelates as well as laymen. Columbus was loaded with chains by the pious prince whose castles he had filled with the treasures of a new world; the philosopher Vanini was betrayed to death by a Christian spy who had for years enjoyed his confidence and his hospitality. John Huss was surrendered by the imperial priest-slave whose own hand had signed the document of his safe-conduct. The earl of Stafford was sacrificed by the crowned Jesuit who divided his time between prayers for the theological interests of his subjects and plots for the

subversion of their political liberties. The dogma of self-denial has not prevented our financial pharisees from amassing fortunes that would dwarf the spoils of a Roman triumphator; but the hospitality of Mæcenas has not survived the religion of Nature. Our philosophers have to study the problems of life in a personal struggle for existence; our poets have to choose between starvation and hypocrisy. Patriots are left to the consoling reflection that virtue is its own reward. The endowers of theological seminaries seem to rely on the mercy of Christ to cancel the odium of their shortcomings in the recognition of secular merit. Kepler, Campanella, and Spinoza perished in penury. Locke and Rousseau, the recognized primates of the intellectual world, were left to languish in exile, admired and neglected by a host of "friends"—Christian friends—in every city of the civilized world. Schubert, Buerger, and Frederick Schiller, the idols of a poetry-loving nation, were left to fight the bitter struggle for existence to an extreme of which all the records of pagan antiquity furnish only a single parallel. Anaxagoras, the founder of a philosophic school counting its disciples by thousands, was left to languish in exile, till the rumor of his extreme distress brought the most illustrious of those disciples to the sick-bed of his neglected teacher. "Do not, do not leave us!" he cried, in an agony of remorse; "we cannot afford to lose the light of our life!"

"O Pericles," said the dying exile, "those who need a lamp should take care to supply it with oil!"

But how many lights of our latter-day lives have

thus been extinguished before their time ! Not one of the plethoric British aristocrats who spiced their leisure with the sweets of poetry ever dreamed of relieving the cruel distress of Robert Burns, or of cutting the knot of the financial embroglio that strangled out the life of Sir Walter Scott.

E.—REFORM.

Time is the test of truth ; and the fallacies of the "Brotherhood in Christ" plan have been abundantly demonstrated by their consequences. Instead of being a bond of union, the doctrine of renunciation has been found to be a root of discord and rancor, and in times of need the fellowship of its converts has proved a most rotten staff. Even the wretches who betrayed their friends to the spies of the Holy Inquisition had no difficulty in palliating the infamy of their conduct with the sanction of scriptural precepts. For centuries the appeals of martyrs to the cause of freedom and Freethought have been answered with the advice of Christian submission to the "powers that be," and our modern pharisees rarely fail to reprove the "worldliness" of a poor neighbor's lament for the loss of his earthly possessions.

The founder of "Positivism," the Religion of Humanity, proposes to dedicate the days of the year to the leaders of progress, and inscribe our places of worship with the names of discoverers, reformers, and philosophers rather than of bigots and world-despising saints. And for the sake of those who would not wish to repeat the mistake of sacrificing

the present to the past, the builders of those sanctuaries should add a temple of Friendship. From the adoration of self-torturing fanatics, from the worship of sorrow and the love of enemies, mankind will at last revert to the ancestral plan of elective affinities, and the dread of preferring natural to theological duties will not much longer prevent our fellow-men from recognizing their obligations to their earthly benefactors.

CHAPTER XV.

EDUCATION.

A.—LESSONS OF INSTINCT.

The doctrine of Pythagoras, the philosophic Messiah of Paganism, included the strange tenet of *metempsychosis*. After death, held the confessors of that dogma, the souls of men and brutes would reappear in new forms, higher or lower, according to the character-traits of the dying individual. Thus the soul of a wealthy glutton might be reborn in a pig-sty, that of a high-minded peasant perhaps on the throne of a king. Death and rebirth are the upper and lower spokes of a wheel that turns and turns forever, and in the persons of their neighbors the Pythagoreans saw wanderers that might have walked this earth thousands of years ago.

The strangeness of such a theory is still increased by the circumstance that its teacher was an eminent astronomer, an accomplished mathematician, and the leader of a memorable hygienic reform. Our aston-

ishment is not lessened by the well-established fact that, under some form or other, the doctrine of soul-migration has for ages been the accepted creed of a large plurality of our fellow-men. It is well known, however, that to his trusted disciples Pythagoras imparted an *esoteric* or explanatory version of his dogmas; and if we learn that the great philosopher attached a special importance to the influence of hereditary dispositions, the truth at last dawns upon us that the doctrine of metempsychosis referred to the reappearance of individual types, passions, and dispositions in the bodily and mental characteristics of the *next generation*. "Parents live in their children." The instinctive recognition of that truth reconciles our dumb fellow-creatures to the prospect of death. At the end of summer the night-moth carefully deposits her eggs in a silver cradle, hidden safe in the crevice of some sheltering nook, where they will survive the rigor of the winter and answer the first summons of spring. Having thus, as it were, insured the resurrection of her type, the parent moth quietly resigns herself to the fate of sleeping her own winter-slumber in the arms of death. On the Orinoco wounded river-turtles will use their last strength to climb the slope of some bush-hidden sand-bank, and after intrusting their eggs to the protection of the deep drift sand, will reënter the water and quietly float off with the seaward currents. In the virgin-woods of Southern Mexico, where the harpy-eagle fills the maws of her hungry brood by incessant raids on the small denizens of the tree-tops, the traveler D'Armand once witnessed a curious

scene. An eagle had pounced upon a nursing mother monkey, who at first struggled desperately to free herself from the claws of the murderer; but, finding resistance in vain, she loosened her grasp on the branches, and, just as the eagle carried her off, she disengaged the arm of her baby from her neck, and shaking off the little creature with a swing of her arm, she deliberately flung it back into the sheltering foliage of the tree-top, thus taking the last possible chance of surviving in her child.

The "dread of annihilation" reveals itself in the instincts of a dying philosopher as plainly as in the instincts of a wounded animal; but, on self-examination, that fear would prove to have but little in common with a special solicitude for the preservation of material forms or combinations—conditions which the process of organic change constantly modifies in the cradle as well as in the grave. It is rather the type of the body and its correlated mental dispositions which the hope of resurrection yearns to preserve, and even childless men have often partly realized that hope by impressing the image of their soul on a younger mind, and transmitting their cherished projects and theories through the medium of education. In the consciousness of that accomplished task Socrates could as calmly die in the arms of his disciples as the Hebrew patriarch in the arms of his children and grandchildren. "You kill a sower," cried St. Adalbert under the clubs of his assassins, "but the seed he has planted will rise and survive both his love and your hatred."

Even the influence of a great practical example has

often impressed the mental type of a reformer or patriot on a series of subsequent generations. The Buddhist Calanus, preaching the doctrine of renunciation to an audience of scoffers, deeply affected the most thoughtless of his witnesses by proving his personal convictions in the flames of a funeral pile. "I leave no sons," were the last words of Epaminondas, "but two immortal daughters, the battles of Leuctra and Mantinea." Rousseau smiled when he learned the intrigues of his enemies who were trying their utmost to enlist the coöperation of a violent pulpit-orator. "They are busy recruiting their corps of partisans," said he, "but Time will raise me an ally in every intelligent reader of the next generation."

B.—REWARDS OF CONFORMITY.

In the simple lives of the lower animals every day may bring the sufficient reward of its toil; but the problem of progress, even from the first dawn of civilization, involves tasks too apt to extend beyond the span of individual existence. The forest-clearing husbandman, the state-founding patriot, the scientific inquirer, all risk to receive the summons of night before the completion of their labor. Before reaching the goal of their hopes their earthly pilgrimage may end at the brink of the unknown river, and education alone can bridge that gulf, and make every day the way-station of an unbroken road. Children or children's children will take up the staff from the last resting-place of their pilgrim father; and, moreover, all progress is cumulative. Every laborer works with the experience of his forefathers, as well as his own;

every son stands on the shoulders of his father. Even the failure of individual efforts contributes a helpful lesson to the success of the next attempt :

Freedom's brave battle, once begun,
Bequeathed from bleeding sire to son,
Though often baffled, e'er is won.

Persistent adherence to the programme of a traditional policy has often made the work of successive centuries the triumphant execution of a single plan. The empire of Islam sprung from the seed which the prophet of Mecca had planted in the soil of his native land. The storm of the Protestant revolt rose from the anathemas of a poor Wittenberg friar ; the unquenchable fire of the French Revolution was kindled by the burning indignation of a Swiss recluse, and his fervid appeals :

Those oracles that set the world aflame,
Nor ceased to burn till kingdoms were no more ;

and the vast fabric of our republican federation was founded by the poor colonists who sought independence in the freedom of the wilderness, and combined against the power of a selfish despot. Education sows a seed which may sprout even during the lifetime of the sower, and bless individual life with the sweets of a guaranteed triumph over the power of death. *Resurgam*, "I shall live after death," expresses the significance of that triumph, and of the "esoteric doctrine of Pythagoras."

C.—PERVERSION.

The Christian church has constantly perverted the purpose of education, but has never yet deserved the

reproach of having neglected its means. From the very beginning the sect of the apostle-training Galilean has been a sect of assiduous educators. They were not satisfied with founding schools and opening their doors to all comers, but went forth in quest of new converts, and pursued their aim with a persistence of zeal and a versatility of skill that could not fail to accomplish its purpose. As soon as a sufficient increase of power enabled them to control the institutes of primary instruction they turned their chief attention to the dogmatical education of the young. They derived no aid from the attractiveness and still less from the plausibility of their doctrine, but they realized Schopenhauer's remark that "there is in childhood a period measured by six, or at most by ten years, when any well-inculcated dogma, no matter how extravagantly absurd, is sure to retain its hold for life." And though the propagation of an unnatural creed is not favored by natural fertility, the naturally barren doctrine of renunciation was thus successfully propagated by a system of incessant grafting. By the skilful application of that process the most dissimilar plants were made subservient to its purpose. The "Worship of Sorrow" with its whining renunciation of worldly enjoyments, and its indifference to health and physical education, was grafted on the manful naturalism of the Hebrew law-giver. Saint-worship, the veneration of self-torturing fanatics, was grafted on a stem of pagan mythology, and dozens of Christian martyrs have thus usurped the honor and the sacrifices of pagan temples. Christian holidays were grafted on the festivals of

the nature-loving Saxons. But persuasion failing, the missionaries of the cross did not hesitate to resort to more conclusive measures. Like refractory children cudgelled along the path of knowledge, the obstinate skeptics of northern Europe were harassed with fire and sword till they could not help admitting the dangers of unbelief. The gardenlands of the Albigenses were wasted till they found no difficulty in yearning for the peace of a better world. Philosophers were tortured in the prisons of the Holy Inquisition till the sorrows of life favored the renunciation of its hopes.

For thirteen centuries the sunshine of millions of human hearts was ruthlessly sacrificed to promote the task of luring mankind from life to ghost-land, and during all those ages education was systematically turned from a blessing into an earth-blighting curse.

D.—PENALTIES OF NEGLECT.

There is a story of a Portuguese slave-dealer who carried a private chaplain on his pay-roll, and frequently expressed his solicitude for the spiritual welfare of his shackled captives. A very similar kind of spiritual duty has for centuries been made the excuse for an almost total neglect of secular education. Divorced from the control of common sense, religion soon degenerated into mere ceremonialism. A priest who would travel twenty miles through a snow-storm to supply a dying man with a consecrated wafer had no sympathy with the needs of the living. He would extort the last penny of his

tithe at the risk of starving a village full of needy parishioners. He would groan at the sight of an unbaptized child, but had not a drop of water to cool the brows of burning Moors or Jews. He would rave about the cruelty of a prince who had deprived the clergy of their mass-shillings, but had no ear for the laments of the exiled Moriscoes or the curses of starving serfs.

Such was the morality which arrogated the right of suppressing that system of physical and intellectual education which had filled the homes of the Mediterranean nations with all the blessings of health, science, and beauty. Theological training had failed to kindle the dawn of a supernatural millennium, but had thoroughly succeeded in extinguishing the light of human reason. Not absolute ignorance only, but baneful superstition—worse than ignorance by just as much as poison is worse than hunger—was for centuries the inevitable result of all so-called school-training; and the traditions of that age of priest-rule have made religion almost a synonyme of cant. It also gave book-learning its supposed tendency to mental aberration. Can we wonder at that result of an age when the literary products of Christian Europe were confined almost exclusively to ghost-stories and manuals of ceremony? Can we wonder that delusions of the most preposterous kind assumed the virulence of epidemic diseases? Maniacs of self-mutilation, of epileptic contortions, of were-wolf panics, traversed Europe from end to end. Men gloried in ignorance, and boasted their neglect of worldly science till the con-

sequences of that neglect avenged its folly in actual madness.

The saddest of all the sad "it might have beens" is, perhaps, a reverie on the probable results of earlier emancipation—of the employment of thirteen worse than wasted centuries in scientific inquiries, agricultural improvements, social and sanitary reforms. We might have failed to enter the portals of the New Jerusalem, but we would probably have regained our earthly paradise.

E.—REFORM.

The days of the Holy Inquisition are past; but the restless propaganda of Jesuitry still shames the inactivity of Rationalism. Our friends sit listless, relying on the theoretical advantages of their cause, while the busy intrigues of our enemies secure them all practical advantages.

Even in our model republic only primary education stands neutral, while private enterprise has made nearly every higher college a stronghold of dogmatism. And even the semi-secularism of primary instruction is more than offset by the ultra-orthodoxy of "Sunday-schools." Millions of factory children have to sacrifice their only day of leisure at the bidding of their dogmatic task-master and with the timid connivance of their parents. "We cannot row against the stream," I have heard even Free-thinkers say. "Let the youngsters join the crowd; if it does them no good, it can do no harm." But it will do harm, even beyond the waste of time and the wasted opportunities for health-giving exercise. The

process of dogmatic inoculation may fail to serve its direct purpose, but the weekly repetition of the experiment is sure to contaminate the moral organism with unsound humors which may become virulent at unexpected times and, likely enough, undermine that very peace of the household which a short-sighted mother hoped to promote by driving her boys to Sunday-school, as she would drive troublesome cattle to a public pasture.

The Freethinkers of every community should combine to engage a teacher, or at least facilitate home instruction by collecting text-books of Secularism, such as Voltaire's "Philosophical Cyclopaedia;" Rousseau's "Emile;" Hallam's "History of the Middle Ages;" Ingersoll's pamphlets; Paine's "Age of Reason;" Lecky's "History of Rationalism" and "History of Morals;" Lessing's "Nathan;" Goethe and Schiller's "Xenions;" Darwin's "Descent of Man;" Plutarch's Biographies; Trelawney's "Last Days of Shelley and Byron;" McDonnell's Freethought novels; Parker Pillsbury's "Review of Sabbatarian Legislation;" Reade's "Martyrdom of Man;" Bennett's "Gods and Religions of Ancient and Modern Times;" Gibbon's "History of Christianity;" Keeler's "Short History of the Bible;" "Bible Myths and Their Parallels in Other Religions;" "Supernatural Religion;" Greg's "Creed of Christendom;" Lord Amberley's "Analysis of Religious Belief;" "Religion Not History."

We should have Freethought colleges and Secular missions, and even isolated Liberals might do better than "drift with the stream." They might let their

children pass their Sundays in the freedom of the forests and mountains to worship the God of Nature in his own temple, and learn a lesson from the parental devotion of their dumb fellow-creatures. She-wolves, deprived of their whelps, have been known to enter human habitations at night to suckle their young through the bars of a heavy cage. Thrushes and fly-catchers will enter an open window to feed or rescue their captive nestlings, and with a still wider sympathy a Liberal friend of mine tries to aid his neighbors' children, as well as his own. Renouncing the hope of abolishing Sabbatarianism, he conceived the idea of controlling it, and induced his neighbors to send their children to a "Sunday Garden" with a free museum of pictures and stuffed birds, gymnastic contrivances, and a little restaurant of free temperance refreshments—apples, peanuts, and lemonade. He defrays the expenses of the establishment, which his neighbors consider a sort of modified kindergarten; and under the name of "Sunday books" circulates a private library of purely secular literature.

"If life shall have been duly rationalized by science," says Herbert Spencer, "parents will learn to consider a sound physical constitution as an entailed estate, which should be transmitted unimpaired, if not improved;" and with a similar recognition of social obligations Freethinkers should endeavor to transmit to their children a bequest of unimpaired common sense. Loyalty to their Protestant ancestors, loyalty to posterity, and to the majesty of truth herself, should prompt us to stand

bravely by our colors and train our children to continue the struggle for light and independence.

By the far-reaching influence of education Secularists should bridge the chasm which orthodoxy hopes to cross on the wings of faith. Secularism shall preach the gospel of immortality on earth.

IV.—OBJECTIVE MAXIMS.

CHAPTER XVI.

FOREST CULTURE.

A.—LESSONS OF INSTINCT.

It is wonderful how often instinct has anticipated the practical lessons of science. Long before comparative anatomy taught us the characteristics of our digestive organs the testimony of our natural predilections indicated the advantages of a frugal diet. Long before modern hygiene pointed out the perils of breathing the atmosphere of unventilated dormitories the evidence of our senses warned us against the foulness of that atmosphere. And ages before the researches of agricultural chemistry began to reveal the protective influence of arboreal vegetation, an instinct which the child of civilization shares with the rudest savage revolted against the reckless destruction of fine woodlands, and sought to retrieve the loss by surrounding private homes with groves and parks. The love of forests is as natural to our species as the love of rocks to the mountain-goat. Trees and tree-shade are associated with our traditions of paradise, and that the cradle of the human race was not a brick tenement or a wheat-farm, but a tree-garden, is one of the few points on which the genesis of Darwin agrees with that of the Penta-

teuch. The happiest days of childhood would lose half their charm without the witchery of woodland rambles, and, like an echo of the foreworld, the instincts of our forest-born ancestors often awake in the souls of their descendants. City children are transported with delight at the first sight of a wood-covered landscape, and the evergreen arcades of a tropical forest would charm the soul of a young Esquimaux as the ever-rolling waves of the ocean would awaken the yearnings of a captive sea-bird. The traveler Chamisso mentions an interview with a poor Yakoot, a native of the North Siberian ice-coast, who happened to get hold of an illustrated magazine with a woodcut of a fine southern landscape: a river-valley, rocky slopes rising toward a park-like lawn with a background of wooded highlands. With that journal on his knees the Yakoot squatted down in front of the traveler's tent, and thus sat motionless, hour after hour, contemplating the picture in silent rapture. "How would you like to live in a country of that kind?" asked the professor. The Yakoot folded his hands, but continued his reverie. "I hope we shall go there if we are good," said he at last, with a sigh of deep emotion.

The importance of hereditary instincts can be often measured by the degree of their persistence. Man is supposed to be a native of the trans-Caucasian highlands—Armenia, perhaps, or the terrace-lands of the Hindookoosh. Yet agriculture has succeeded in developing a type of human beings who would instinctively prefer a fertile plain to the grandest highland paradise of the East. Warfare has in like man-

ner engendered an instinctive fondness for a life of perilous adventure, as contrasted with the arcadian security of the Golden Age. There are men who prefer slavery to freedom, and think pallor more attractive than the glow of health, but a millennium of unnaturalism has as yet failed to develop a species of human beings who would instinctively prefer the dreariness of a treeless plain to the verdure of a primeval forest.

B.—REWARDS OF CONFORMITY.

The love of forest-trees is a characteristic of the nature-abiding nations of the North, and has rewarded itself by an almost complete reversion of the original contrast between the garden lands of the South and the inhospitable wilderness of the higher latitudes. Forest destruction has turned Southern Europe into a desert, while the preservation of forests has made the homes of the hyperborean hunters an Eden of beauty and fertility. "One-third to the hunter, two-thirds to the husbandman," was the rule of Margrave Philip in his distribution of forest and fields, and expresses the exact proportion which modern science indicates as most favorable to the perennial fertility of our farm-lands. In a single century the forest-destroying Spaniards turned many of their American colonies from gardens into sand-wastes, while, after fourteen hundred years of continuous cultivation, the fields of the Danubian Valley are still as fertile as in the days of Trajan and Tacitus. Along the river-banks and half-way up the foot-hills the arable land has been cleared, but higher

up the forest has been spared. All the highlands from Ratisbon to Budha-Pesth still form a continuous mountain park of stately oaks and pines, and, as a consequence, springs never fail; crops are safe against winter floods and summer drouths; song-birds still return to their birthland, and reward their protectors by the destruction of noxious insects; meadows, grain-fields, and orchards produce their abundant harvest year after year; famine is unknown, and contagious diseases rarely assume an epidemic form. In Switzerland and Prussia the preservation of the now remaining woodlands is guaranteed by strict protective laws; Scandinavia requires her forest-owners to replant a certain portion of every larger clearing; in Great Britain the parks of the ancient mansions are protected like sacred monuments of the past, and landowners vie in lining their field-trails with rows of shade-trees. The fertility of those lands is a constant surprise to the American traveler disposed to associate the idea of eastern landscapes with the picture of worn-out fields. Surrounded by Russian steppes and trans-Alpine deserts, the homes of the Germanic nations still form a Goshen of verdure and abundance. Forest protectors have not lost their earthly paradise.

C.—PERVERSION.

Sixteen hundred years ago the highlands of the European continent were still covered with a dense growth of primeval forests. The healthfulness and fertility of the Mediterranean coastlands surpassed that of the most favored regions of the present world,

and the dependence of those blessings on the preservation of the spring-sheltering woodlands was clearly recognized by such writers as Pliny and Columella, though their own experience did not enable them to suspect all the ruinous consequences of that wholesale forest destruction, which modern science has justly denounced as the *ne plus ultra* folly of human improvidence. Practical experiments had, however, demonstrated such facts as the failing of springs on treeless slopes, and the violence of winter floods in districts unprotected by rain-absorbing forests, and tree culture was practiced as a regular branch of rational husbandry. But with the triumph of the Galilean church came the millennium of unnaturalism. Rational agriculture became a tradition of the past; the culture of secular science was fiercely denounced from thousands of pulpits; improvidence, "unworldliness," and superstitious reliance on the efficacy of prayer were systematically inculcated as supreme virtues; the cultivators of the soil were treated like unclean beasts, and for a series of centuries the garden regions of the East were abandoned to the inevitable consequences of neglect and misculture.

Millions of acres of fine forest lands passed into the hands of ignorant priests, who, in their greed for immediate gain, and their reckless indifference to the secular welfare of posterity, doomed their trees to the ax, entailing barrenness on regions favored by every natural advantage of soil and climate. Drouths, famines, and locust-swarms failed to impress the protest of nature. Her enemies had no concern with such worldly vanities as the study of climatic vicissi-

tudes, and hoped to avert the consequences of their folly by an appeal to the intercession of miracle-working saints.

D.—PENALTIES OF NEGLECT.

Yet the saints failed to answer that appeal. The outraged laws of nature avenged themselves with the inexorable sequence of cause and effect, and in spite of all prayer-meetings the significance of their crime against the fertility of their Mother Earth was brought home to the experience of the ruthless destroyers. In their net-work of moss and leaves forests absorb the moisture of the atmosphere, and thus nourish the springs which in their turn replenish the brooks and rivers. When the highlands of the Mediterranean peninsulas had been deprived of their woods the general failing of springs turned rivers into shallow brooks, and brook-valleys into arid ravines. Summer rains became too scarce to support the vegetation of the farm lands; the tillers of the soil had to resort to irrigation and eat their bread in a harder and ever harder struggle for existence, till vast areas of once fertile lands had to be entirely abandoned, and the arable territory of this planet was yearly reduced by the growth of an artificial desert. And while the summer drouths became more severe, winter floods became more frequent and destructive. From the treeless slopes of the Mediterranean coastlands winter rains descended like waterfalls, turning once placid rivers into raging torrents, and depriving the fields of their small remnant of fertile mould. Hillsides which in the times of

Virgil had furnished pastures for thousands of herds were thus reduced to a state of desolation almost as complete as that of a volcanic cinder-field; their dells choked with rock *debris*, their terraces rent by a chaos of gullies and clefts, while the soil, swept from the highlands, was accumulated in mudbanks near the mouth of the river. Harbors once offering anchorage for the fleets of an empire became inaccessible from the ever-growing deposits of diluvium. Yearly mud inundations engendered climatic diseases and all-pervading gnat swarms. Insectivorous birds, deprived of their nest shelter, emigrated to less inhospitable lands, and the scant produce of tillage had to be shared with ever-multiplying legions of destructive insects. Along the south coasts of Italy the shore-hills for hundreds of miles present the same dreary aspect of monotonous barrenness. Greece is a naked rock; forests have almost disappeared from the plains of Spain and Asia Minor; in northern Africa millions of square miles, once teeming with cities and castles, have been reduced to a state of hopeless aridity. The Mediterranean, once a forest-lake of paradise, has become a Dead Sea, surrounded by barren rocks, and sandy or dust-clouded plains. According to a careful comparison of the extant data of statistical computations, the population of the territory once comprised under the jurisdiction of the Cæsars has thus been reduced from 290,000,000 to less than 80,000,000, *i.e.*, from a hundred to less than thirty per cent. In other words, an average of seventy-eight in a hundred human beings have been starved out of existence, and the same area of ground

which once supported a flourishing village, at present almost fails to satisfy the hunger of a small family. For we must not forget that modern industry has devised methods of subsistence undreamed of by the nations of antiquity, and that the religion of resignation has taught millions to endure degrees of wretchedness which nine out of ten pagans would have refused to prefer to the alternative of self-destruction. A whole tenement of priest-ridden lazaronis now contrive to eke out a subsistence on a pittance which a citizen of ancient Rome would have been too proud to ask a woman to share ; yet with all their talent for surviving under conditions of soul and body degrading distress, only eight children of the Mediterranean coastlands can now wring a sickly subsistence from the same area of soil which once sufficed to supply twenty-nine men with all the blessings of health and abundance.

E.—REFORM.

The discovery of two new continents has respited the doomed nations of the Old World, but the rapid colonization of those land supplements will soon reduce mankind to the alternative of tree-culture or emigration to the charity-farm of the New Jerusalem. In the words of a great German naturalist, "We shall have to work the world over again." On a small scale the practicability of that plan has already been conclusively demonstrated. By tree-culture alone arid sand-wastes have been restored to something like tolerable fertility, if not to anything approaching their pristine productiveness. In the lower valley of

the Nile (the ancient Thebaïd) Ibrahim Pasha set out thirty-five million Circassian forest-trees, of which one-third at least took root, and by their growth not only reclaimed the sterility of the soil but increased the average annual rainfall from four to fifteen inches. In the Landes of western France a large tract of land has been reclaimed from the inroads of the coast sand by lining the dunes with a thick belt of trees, and some fifteen hundred square miles of once worthless fields have thus been restored to a high degree of productiveness. In the Austrian *Karst*, a sterile plateau of limestone cliffs and caves has been dotted with groves till the valleys have been refreshed with the water of resuscitated springs; and pasture-lands, long too impoverished even for the sustenance of mountain goats, once more are covered with herds of thriving cattle.

The experience of the next three or four generations will not fail to make every intelligent farmer a tree-planter. Our barren fields will be turned into pine plantations, every public highway will be lined with shade-trees. The communities of the next century will vie in the consecration of township groves, in the founding of forestry clubs, in the celebration of arbor days and woodland festivals. The barren table-lands of our central states will be reclaimed, and before the end of the twentieth century the work of redemption will be extended to the great deserts of the Eastern continents. And as a hundred years ago armies of tree-fellers were busy wresting land from the primeval forest, in a hundred years more armies of tree-planters will be busy wresting land

from the desert. The men that will "work the world over again" will not be apt to forget the terms of their second lease.

In turning up the soil of the reclaimed desert they will unearth the foundations of buried temples, temples once sacred to the worship of gods whose prophets drenched the world with blood to enforce the observance of circumcision rites, wafer rites, and immersion rites, and filled their scriptures with minute instructions for the ordinances of priests and the mumbling of prescribed prayers. In musing over the ruins of such temples, the children of the future will have a chance for many profitable meditations—the reflection, for instance: From what mistakes those alleged saviors might have saved the world if their voluminous gospels had devoted a single page to an injunction against the earth-desolating folly of forest-destruction!

CHAPTER XVII.

RECREATION.

A.—LESSONS OF INSTINCT.

The indoor occupations of civilized life imply the necessity of providing artificial substitutes for the opportunities of physical exercise, which men in a state of nature can find abundantly in the course of such healthful pursuits as hunting, fishing, and primitive agriculture. For similar reasons civilization ought to compensate the lost chance of outdoor sports which only the favorites of fortune can afford

to combine with the exigencies of city life. To the children of nature life is a festival; outdoor recreations, exciting sports, offer themselves freely and frequently enough to dispense with artificial supplements; but the dreariness of workshop life makes those substitutes a moral as well as physical necessity. Under the influence of unalloyed drudgery the human soul withers like a plant in a sunless cave, and weariness of heart reacts on the body in a way analogous to the health-undermining effect of sorrow and repeated disappointment. To the unbiased judgment of our pagan forefathers the necessity of providing city dwellers with opportunities for public recreation appeared, indeed, as evident as the necessity of counteracting the rigors of the higher latitudes with contrivances for a supply of artificial warmth. The cities of ancient Greece had weekly and monthly festivals, besides the yearly reunions of competing athletes and artists, and once in four years the champions of the land met to contest the prize of national supremacy in the presence of assembled millions. Hostilities, even during the crisis of civil war, were suspended to insure free access to the plains of Corinth, where the Olympic Games were celebrated with a regularity that made their period the basis of chronological computation for a space of nearly eight hundred years. When Rome became the capital of the world, the yearly disbursements for the subvention of free public recreations equaled the tribute of a wealthy province. There were free race courses, gymnasia, music halls, and wrestling-ring; free public baths and magnificent amphitheaters for

the exhibition of free dramatic performances, gladiatorial combats, and curiosities of art and natural history. Every proconsul of a foreign province was instructed to collect wild animals and specimens of rare birds and reptiles; every triumphator devoted a portion of his spoils to a celebration of free *circenses*—"circus games"—by no means limited to the mutual slaughter of prize fighters, but including horse races, concerts, trials of skill, and new arts. It would be a mistake to suppose that the liberality of such establishments offered a premium on idleness. The immense increase of the metropolitan population justified the constant extension of that liberality, but even after the erection of permanent amphitheaters the vigilance of public censors discouraged mendicancy; the complaints of wives, creditors, and landlords against habitual idlers were made the basis of penal proceedings, and from the total appropriations for the support of free municipal institutions the overseers of the poor deducted considerable sums for purposes of public charity.

Nor did the citizens of the metropolis monopolize the privilege of free public amusements. At the time of the Antonines not less than fifty cities of Italy alone had amphitheaters of their own, and the smallest hamlet had at least a *palaestra*, where the local champions met every evening for a trial of strength and skill.

B.—REWARDS OF CONFORMITY.

The alternation of day and night should reveal the truth that nature is averse to permanent gloom.

Sunlight is a primary condition of all nobler life, and only ignorance or basest selfishness can doom a child of earth to the misery of toil uncheered by the sun-rays of recreation. For even enlightened selfishness would recognize the advantages of the pagan plan. The passions of personal ambition burnt then as fiercely as now, but the Roman world-conquerors thought it wiser, as well as nobler, to share their spoils with the soldiers who had fought their battles, with the workmen who had reared their castles, with the neighbors who had witnessed their triumphs. The very slaves of Greece and Rome were indulged in periodic enjoyments of all the luxuries fortune had bestowed upon their masters; at the end of the working-day menials and artisans forgot their toil amidst the wonders of the amphitheater, and neither their work nor their work-givers were the worse for it. The promise of the evening cheered the labors of the day; minds frequently unbent by the relaxation of diverting pastimes were less apt to break under the strain of toil, less liable to yield to the temptation of despondency, envy, and despair.

During the last four weeks of his Egyptian campaign Napoleon relieved the tedium of camp-life by a series of athletic games and horse-races, and thus succeeded in sustaining the spirit of his troops under hardships which at first threatened to demoralize even his veterans. For similar purposes and with similar success, Marshal Saxe indulged his men in a variety of exciting sports, and Captain Kane found dramatic entertainments the best prophylactic against the influence of a monotonous diet combined

with an average temperature of fifty degrees below zero. Captain Burton ascribes the longevity of the nomadic Arabs to their habit of passing their evenings as cheerfully as their stock of provisions and anecdotes will permit, and it is a suggestive circumstance that the joy-loving aristocracy of medieval France could boast a surprising number of octogenarians, and that the gay capitals of modern Europe, with all their vices, enjoy a better chance of longevity than the dull provincial towns.

C.—PERVERSION.

The superstition which dooms its votaries to a worship of sorrow has for centuries treated pleasure and sin as synonymous terms. In the era of the Cæsars the licentious passions of a large metropolis gave that asceticism a specious pretext; but its true purpose was soon after revealed by the suppression of rustic pastimes, of athletic sports, and at last, even of the classic festival which for centuries had assembled the champions of the Mediterranean nations on the isthmus of Corinth. With a similar rancor of bigoted intolerance the Puritans suppressed the sports of "merry old England," and their fanatical protests against the most harmless amusements would be utterly incomprehensible if the secret of Christian asceticism had not been unriddled by the study of the Buddhistic parent-dogma. The doctrine which the apostle of Galilee thought it wisest to veil in parables and metaphors, the Indian messiah of anti-naturalism reveals in its ghastly nakedness as an attempt to wean the hearts of mankind

from their earth-born loves and reconcile them to the alternative of annihilation—"Nirvana"—the only refuge from the delusions of a life outweighing a single joy by a hundred sorrows. Not life only, but the very instincts of life were to be suppressed, to prevent their revival in new forms of re-birth; and in pursuit of that plan the prophet of Nepaul does not hesitate to warn his disciples against sleeping twice under the same tree, to lessen the chance of undue fondness for any earthly object whatever. The indulgements of life-endearing desires, that creed denounced as the height of folly and recommended absolute abstinence from physical enjoyments as the shortest path to the goal of redemption. In its practical consequences, if not in its theoretical significances, the same principle asserts itself in the doctrine of the New Testament, and justified the dread of the life-loving pagans in realizing the stealthy growth of the Galilean church, and anticipating the ultimate consequences of that gospel of renunciation whose ideal of perfection was the *other-worldliness* of an earth-despising fanatic. More or less consciously, the suppression of earthly desires has always been pursued as the chief aim of Christian dogmatism; the "world" has ever been the antithesis of the Christian kingdom of God, the "flesh" the irreconcilable antagonist of the regenerate soul. Hence that rancorous fury against the "worldliness" of naturalism, against the pagan worship of joy, against the modern revivals of that worship. Hence the grief of those "whining saints who groaned in spirit at the sight of Jack in the Green;" hence the crusade

against Easter-fires, May-poles, foot-races, country excursions, round-dances, and picnics; hence the anathemas against the athletic sports of ancient Greece and the entertainments of the modern theater.

D.—PENALTIES OF NEGLECT.

Wherever the fanatics of the Galilean church have trampled the flowers of earth, the wasted gardens have been covered with a rank thicket of weeds. Outlawed freedom has given way to the caprice of despots and the license of crime; outraged common sense has yielded to the vagaries of superstition; the suppression of healthful recreation has avenged itself in the riots of secret vice. The history of alcoholism proves that every revival of asceticism has been followed by an increase of intemperance, as inevitably as the obstruction of a natural river-bed would be followed by an inundation. When the convent-slaves of the Middle Ages had been deprived of every chance of devoting a leisure hour to more healthful recreations, neither the rigor of their vows nor the bigotry of their creed could prevent them from drowning their misery in wine. When the Puritans of the seventeenth century had turned Scotland into an ecclesiastic penitentiary, the burghers of the Sabbath-stricken towns sought refuge in the dream-land of intoxication. The experience of many centuries has, indeed, forced the priesthood of southern Europe to tolerate Sunday recreations as a minor evil. In Spain the bull-rings of the larger cities open every Sunday at 2 P. M. In Italy the patronage of Sunday excursions and Sunday theaters is limited

only by the financial resources of their patrons. In France Sunday is by large odds the gayest day in the week. In the large cities of Islam the muftis connive at Sunday dances and Sunday horse-races; and as a consequence a much less pardonable abuse of holidays is far rarer in southern Europe than in the cities of the Sabbatarian north, the consumption of Sunday intoxicants being larger in Great Britain than in France, Austria, Spain, Portugal, and Italy taken together. Climatic causes may have their share in effecting that difference; another cause was revealed when the followers of Ibn Hanbal attempted to enforce the asceticism of their master upon the citizens of Bagdad. Ibn Hanbal, the Mohammedan Hudibras, used to travel from village to village, with a horde of bigots, breaking up dance-houses, upsetting the tables of the confectionery pedlers, pelting flower-girls, and thrashing musicians, and when the revolt of a provincial city resulted in the death of the "reformer," his fanatical followers assembled their fellow-converts from all parts of the country, and raided town after town, till they at last forced their way into the capital of the caliphate. The recklessness of their zeal overcame all resistance, but the completeness of their triumph led to a rather unexpected result. Every play-house of the metropolis was not only closed, but utterly demolished; musicians were jailed; dance-girls were left to choose between instant flight and crucifixion; showmen were banished from all public streets; but the dwellings of private citizens were less easy to control, and those private citizens before long evinced a passionate

and ever-increasing fondness for intoxicating drinks. Elders of the mosque were seen wallowing in their gutters, howling blasphemies that would have appalled the heart of the toughest Giaour; dignitaries of the green turban staggered along under the weight of a wine-skin, or waltzed about in imitation of the exiled ballet performers. The Hanbalites convoked tri-weekly, and at last daily, prayer-meetings, but things went from bad to worse, till a counter-revolution finally restored the authority of the old city government, and the flight of the fanatics was attended with a prompt decrease both of spiritual and spirituous excesses.

E.—REFORM.

The predictions of our latter-day augurs would seem to indicate that the civilization of the Caucasian race is drifting toward Socialism; but a modern philosopher reminds us that "a reform, however great, is apt to come out in a different shape from that predicted by the reformers." The citizens of the coming republic will probably waive their claim to free government lunch-houses and similar "establishments for preventing the natural penalties of idleness," but they will most decidedly protest against government interference with the legitimate rewards of industry. Even now, few sane persons can realize the degree of ignorance that enabled the clergy of the Middle Ages to fatten on the proceeds of witchcraft trials and heretic hunts, and the time may be near when our children will find it difficult to conceive the degree of infatuation that could

induce their forefathers to sacrifice their weekly leisure-day at the bidding of brainless and heartless bigots. Drudgery will perhaps continue the hard task-master of the working-week; but the Sundays of the future will be as free as the light of their sun.

CHAPTER XVIII.

DOMESTIC REFORM.

A.—LESSONS OF INSTINCT.

In the nest-building propensity of the social insects the biologist can recognize the first germ of the instinctive desire for the establishment of a permanent home. Certain birds, like the weaver-thrush of the tropics, imitate the community life of the ant and bee, but in all higher animals the homestead instinct is associated with the desire for domestic privacy. The eagle will suffer no other bird to approach the rock that shelters his eyrie; the hawk, the heron, and the kingfisher rear their brood at the greatest possible distance from the nesting-place of their next relatives. Each pair of squirrels try to get a tree all to themselves; and even the social prairie-dog shares its home with strangers (owls and serpents) rather than with another family of its own tribe. The "homestead instinct" of our primitive forefathers formed the first, and perhaps the most potent, stimulus to the acquisition of personal property. There is a period in life when the desire for the possession of a private domicile asserts itself with the power almost of a vital passion; and success in the realization of that desire

solves in many respects the chief problems of individual existence. The love of domestic peace, the delight in the improvement of a private homestead, are the best guarantees of staid habits. There was a time when the neglect of *husbandry* was considered a conclusive proof of profligate habits; and the office of a Roman censor comprised the duty of reproving careless housekeepers. The poorest citizen of the Roman commonwealth had a little *patrimonium* of his own, a dwelling-house, an orchard, and a small lot of land, which he did his best to improve, and where his children learned their first lesson of personal rights in defense of their private playgrounds.

The ruins of Pompeii show that the civilization of the Mediterranean coast-lands had anticipated the conclusion of our sanitarian reformers, who recommend the advantage of cottage-suburbs as a remedy for the horrors of tenement life. Between the *acropolis* and the seaside villas the town forms an aggregation of small dwelling-houses, mostly one-story, but each with a private yard (probably a little garden) or a wide portico, with bath-room and private gymnasiums. And though the ancients were well acquainted with the manufacture of glass, their dwelling-houses were lighted by mere lattice-windows, excluding rain and the glare of the sun, but freely admitting every breeze, and thus solving the problem of ventilation in the simplest and most effective manner. The dwellings of our Saxon forefathers, too, resembled the log-cabins of the Kentucky backwoods, and admitted fresh air so freely that the large family-hearth could dispense with a chimney,

and vented its smoke through the open eaves of the roof. In the palaces of the Roman patricians there were special winter-rooms, with a smoke-flue resembling a narrow alcove ; but even there, ventilation was insured by numerous lattice doors, communicating with as many balconies or terrace roofs.

B.—REWARDS OF CONFORMITY.

The evolution of all hereditary instincts has been explained by the "survival of the fittest," and the instinct of homestead-love has doubtlessly been developed in the same way. The results of its predominance prevailed against the results of its absence. Defensive love of a private "hearth and home" is the basis of patriotism, so unmistakably, indeed, that the fathers of the Roman republic for centuries refused to employ foreign mercenaries, who *had no personal interest in the defense of the soil*. As a modern humorist has cleverly expressed it: "Few men have been patriotic enough to shoulder a musket in defense of a boarding-house." And the golden age of civic virtues is almost limited to the time when every free citizen of Greece and Rome was a landowner.

Nor would it be easy to overrate the subjective advantages of home-life. Health, happiness, and longevity have no more insidious foe than the canker-worm of vexation ; and for the unavoidable disappointments of social life there is no more effective specific than the peace of a prosperous private homestead, soothing the mind with evidences of success in the growth of a promising orchard, in the increase

and improvement of domestic animals, in the happiness of merry children and contented dependents. Xenophon, after proving the excitements of an adventurous life by land and sea, found a truer happiness in the solitude of his Arcadian hunting-lodge. Felix Sylla, Fortune's most constant favorite, abandoned the throne of a mighty empire to enjoy the frugal fare of a small hill-farm. Voltaire, worn out by the trials of a fifty years' life-and-death struggle against the rancor of bigots, recovered his health and his peace of mind amidst the pear-tree plantations of Villa Ferney.

In the resources of medicine and scientific surgery the ancients were far behind even the half-civilized nations of modern times, but their children could enjoy their holidays on their own playground, their sleepers could breathe pure air, their worn-out laborers could retire to the peace of a private home; and they enjoyed a degree of health and vigor which our most progressive nations can hope to re-attain only after centuries of sanitary reform.

C.—PERVERSION.

The germ of the ignoble patience which submits to the miseries of modern tenement-life, and learns to prefer the fetor of a crowded slum-alley to the free air of the woods and fields, can be traced to the voluntary prison-life of the first Christian monasteries. With all the gregariousness of the African race, the very slaves of our American plantations preferred to avoid quarrels and constraint by building a separate cabin for the use of each family; but the ethics

of the Galilean church recognized no privilege of personal rights; the sympathies of family-life were crushed out by the enforcement of celibacy; every symptom of self-assertion was denounced as a revolt against the duty of passive subordination; the very instincts of individuality were systematically suppressed to make each convert a whining, emasculated, self-despising, and world-renouncing "member of the church of Christ." The mortification of the body being the chief object of monastic seclusion, the hygienic architecture of convent buildings was considered a matter of such absolute unimportance that many of the cells (dormitories) had no windows at all, but merely a door communicating with an ill-ventilated gallery, after the plan of our old-style prisons. Eight feet by ten, and eight high, were the usual dimensions of those man-pens; and that utter indifference to the physical health of the inmates was but rarely seconded by a view to the advantages of private meditation is proved by the circumstance that the convent-slaves of the eastern church (in the Byzantine empire, for instance) were not often permitted to enjoy the privacy of their wretched dens; their dormitories were packed like the bunks of a Portuguese slave-ship, and the word *Syncellus* (cell-mate) is used as a cognomen of numerous ecclesiastics. The abbot, and in less ascetic centuries perhaps the learned clerks (legend-writers, etc.), were the only members of a monastic community who could ever rely on the privacy of a single hour. For the admitted purpose of mortifying their love of physical comforts, the weary sleepers, worn-out with penance and hunger,

were summoned to prayer in the middle of the night, or sent out on begging expeditions in the roughest weather. Every vestige of furniture or clothing apt to mitigate the dreariness of discomfort was banished from their cells; they suffered all the hardships without enjoying the peace and security of a hermit's home; novices (on probation), and even the pupils of the convent-schools, were submitted to a similar discipline, and thus monasticism became the training-school of modern tenement-life.

During the latter half of the Middle Ages, feudalism found an additional motive for suppressing the love of domestic independence. The church usurers and aristocrats monopolized real estate, and made it more and more difficult, even for the most industrious of their dependants, to acquire a share of landed property. Every feudal lord secured his control over his serfs by crowding them together in a small *village* (literally an abode of *villains*, i.e., of vile pariahs), where his slave-drivers could at any time rally them for an extra job of socage duty. The incessant raids of mail-clad highway-robbers—robber knights and marauding partisans—obliged all peace-loving freemen to congregate for mutual protection and rear their children in the stone prisons of an over-crowded burgh. The suppression of all natural sciences, including the science of health, aggravated the evil by a persistent neglect of such partial remedies as disinfectants and artificial ventilation. The home of a medieval artisan combined all the disadvantages of a jail and a pest-house.

The revolt against feudalism has at last broken

the stone-fetters of our larger cities ; city walls have been turned into promenades, and convents into store-houses or lunatic asylums ; but the spirit of monasticism still survives ; indifference to the blessings of health and domestic independence seems to have acquired the strength of a second nature, and thousands of our modern factory slaves actually prefer their slum-prisons to the freedom of a cheaper suburban home.

D.—PENALTIES OF NEGLECT.

Nature rarely fails to avenge the violation of her laws, but it might be doubted if the perversion of any other natural instinct has entailed more numerous or direr penalties than our habitual outrages against the instinct of home-life. The monstrosities of our tenement system, by a moderate estimate, cost on the average every year the lives of 1,500,000 children under ten years of age (in Europe and North America), and of 1,200,000 consumptives, besides thousands of victims to epidemic disorders, aggravated, if not engendered, by the influence of vitiated air. Habitual intemperance, too, has undoubtedly been increased by the dearth of home-comforts. Our factory-laborers, our mechanics, and thousands of students and young clerks, spend their evenings in riot, because the man-trap of the lowest grog-shop is, after all, less unattractive than the dungeon of a stifling tenement home. In many of our larger cities similar causes have led to a constant increase of a manner of existence which a modern reformer calls the "celibacy of vice." But the decreasing demand for independent homes is not the

only cause of the decreased supply, and the heartless selfishness of our wealthy land-gluttons has provoked a form of nihilism which threatens to shake, if not to subvert, the very foundations of social life.

E.—REFORM.

That latter danger seems, at last, to have awakened our political economists to the necessity of redressing a many-sided abuse, and the failure of earlier reform projects has at least helped to emphasize the demand for more adequate remedies. The traffic in human life in the floating hells of the African slave-traders hardly called for more stringent repressive measures than the inhumanity of our tenement speculators who fatten on the profits of a system propagating the infallible seeds of pulmonary consumption, and sacrificing the lives of more children than the superstition of the dark ages ever doomed to the altars of Moloch. Even in a country where the jealousy of personal rights would hardly countenance legislative interference with the construction of *private* dwelling-houses, the license of tenement-owners ought to be circumscribed by the conditions of Dr. Paul Boettger's rule, providing for appropriation of a certain number of cubic feet of breathing space, and square feet of window, front, and garden (or play-ground) room for each tenant or family of tenants. The abuse of sub-renting could be limited by similar provisions, and the adoption of the separate cottage plan should be promoted by the reduction of municipal passenger tariffs and suburban taxes.

The plan of equalizing the burden of taxation and

the opportunities of land tenure by a general confiscation and redistribution of real estate might recommend itself as a last resort, though hardly in preference to the project of Fedor Bakunin, the "Russian Mirabeau," who proposed to found new communities under a charter, reserving the tenth part of all building lots for communal purposes, and lease the tenant-right to the highest bidder. The value of those reserve lots would increase with the growth of the town, and by renewing their lease from ten to ten years, the rent could be made to cover the budget of all direct municipal expenses, and leave a fair surplus for charitable and educational purposes. In comparison with the confiscation plan, that project could claim all the advantages which make prevention preferable to a drastic cure.

As a check to the evils of land monopoly the least objectionable plan would seem to be Professor De Graaf's proposition of a graded system of real estate taxation, increasing the rate of tallage with each multiple of a fair homestead lot, and thus taxing a land-shark for the privilege of acquisition, as well as for the actual possession, of an immoderate estate.

The art of making home-life pleasant will yet prove the most effective specific in the list of temperance remedies, and will aid the apostles of Secularism in that work of redemption which the gospel of renunciation has failed to achieve.

CHAPTER XIX.

LEGISLATIVE REFORM.

A.—LESSONS OF INSTINCT.

Progress is a general law of Nature, and the comparative study of Evolution proves that the tendency to improvement increases with the advance to higher planes of development. Among the lowest organisms the rate of progress is hardly appreciable. The sea-shells of the Devonian period can scarcely be distinguished from the shells of our present seas. The balls of amber found on the shores of the Baltic often contain the mummies of insects closely resembling certain species of latter-day flies and beetles, while the horse, the zebra, and other modern varieties of the equine genus, have developed from a creature not much larger than a fox. The Neanderthal skull proves that the heads of our early ancestors were almost ape-like in their protruding jaws and flatness of cranium. The lower animals adhere to inherited habits with a persistency that has often proved their ruin by diminishing their ability of adapting themselves to change of circumstances, as in the case of that sea-lizard of the South sea islands, where its ancestors had for ages managed to escape their only enemies by leaving the water and crawling up the beach, and where their modern descendants persist in crawling *landward* in the hope of escaping from dogs and hunters.

The higher animals, on the other hand, rarely fail to profit by lessons of experience. Trappers know

that the contrivances for capturing wild animals have to be changed from time to time, the older methods being apt to lose their efficacy after the fate of a certain number of victims has warned their relatives. Old rats have been seen driving their young from a dish of arsenic-poisoned gruel. Deer, foxes, and wild turkeys learn to avoid the favorite trails of the hunter; monkeys, on their first arrival in a cold climate, impatiently tear off the jackets or shawls furnished by the kindness of their keeper, but soon learn to appreciate the advantage of artificial teguments, and even try to increase their stock of wardrobe by appropriating every stray piece of cloth they can lay their hands on.

The instinct of adaptation to the conditions of progress has asserted itself both among modern and very ancient nations, though during the mental bondage of the Middle Ages its manifestations were systematically suppressed by the conservatism of religious bigots. Savages show an almost apish eagerness in adopting the habits, fashions, and foibles of civilization. The political institutions of primitive nations are very elastic. The Grecian republics were not only willing but anxious to improve their laws by abolishing abuses and testing amendments. In ancient Rome every general assembly of freemen exercised the functions of a legislative council; legislative reforms were proposed by private citizens and were often carried by acclamation, like the edict for the expulsion of the Tarquins, and the resolution revoking the exile of Cicero.

B.—REWARDS OF CONFORMITY.

Legislative reform, the manful renunciation of entangling alliances with the ghosts of the past, is a sword that has more than once cut a Gordian knot of fatal complications. The suppression of monasteries saved four of our Spanish American sister republics from a brood of vampires that had drained the life-blood of Spain for a series of centuries. In England the timely repeal of the corn-laws averted an explosion that might have rent the coherence of the entire British empire. The abolition of slavery with one blow destroyed a hydra that had menaced the safety of the American Union by an endless series of political disputes. By the abolition of serfdom Czar Alexander elevated the Russian empire to the rank of a progressive nation. The very possibility of national progress depends, indeed, on the hope of legislative reform, for the rigor of unalterable laws prevents social development as the clasp of an iron ring prevents the growth of a tree.

C.—PERVERSION.

All the intelligent nations of antiquity were distinguished by a tendency to legislative progress, till the freedom of that progress was checked by the claims of religious infallibility. The founder of the Zendavesta advanced that claim for a pandect of pretended revelations which became the religious code of Central Asia, and as a consequence the intellectual and industrial development of two valiant nations was stunted by legislative conservatism—the

proverbially "unalterable laws of the Medes and Persians." The claims of an infallible revelation preclude the necessity of reform. "Should mortals presume to improve the ordinances of a God?"

But the blind hatred of progress which has for so many centuries degraded the Christian hierarchy below the priesthood of all other intolerant creeds, is the earth-renouncing antinaturalism of their founder. The priests of Zoroaster, Moses, and Mohammed claimed the sufficiency of their dogmas for the purposes of national prosperity. The priests of the nature-hating Galilean attempted to suppress the very desire of that prosperity. "The doctrine of renunciation made patriotism an idle dream: the saints, whose 'kingdom was not of this world,' had no business with vanities of that sort; no chieftain could trust his neighbor; cities were pitted against cities and castles against castles; patriotic reformers would vainly have appealed to the sympathies of men who had been taught to reserve their interest for the politics of the New Jerusalem" (*Secret of the East*, p. 76).

The Rev. Spurgeon, of London, England, recently provoked the protests of his Liberal colleagues by the confession that he "positively hated advanced thought;" but only five centuries ago such protests were silenced with the gag and the fagot. For nearly a thousand years every clergyman who had the courage to lift his voice in favor of secular reforms was fiercely attacked as a traitor to the sacred cause of other-worldliness. To question the authority of the church was a crime which could not in the least be

palliated by such pleas as the temporal interests of mankind, and a mere hint at the fallibility of "revealed scriptures" could only be expiated in the blood of the offender. Nay, thousands of scientists, historians, and philosophers who had never expressed a direct doubt of that sort, were doomed to a death of torture merely because the logical inference of their discoveries was at variance with the dogmas of the Galilean miracle-mongers. From the reign of Charlemagne to the outbreak of the Protestant revolt the intolerance of Christian bigots interposed an insuperable dam between the projects and the realization of social reforms.

"I cannot conceive," says Hallam, "of any state of society more adverse to the intellectual improvement of mankind than one which admitted no middle line between dissoluteness and fanatical mortifications."

If it had not been for the exotic civilization of Moorish Spain, it would be strictly true that at the end of the thirteenth century, when the enemies of nature had reached the zenith of their power, "the countries of Europe, without a single exception, were worse governed, more ignorant, more superstitious, poorer, and unhappier than the worst governed provinces of pagan Rome."

In China and India, too, the resistance of religious prejudice has for ages frustrated the hopes of political development, and the civilization of Europe dates only from the time when a more or less complete separation of church and state was effected by the insurrection of the Germanic nations, and where the

work of that separation has been left unfinished the march of reform halts at every step. Every claim of dogmatic infallibility has proved a spoke in the wheels of progress.

D.—PENALTIES OF NEGLECT.

The pig-headed conservatism of orthodox nations has never failed to avenge itself in its ultimate results, but its fatuity has, perhaps, been most strikingly illustrated by the practical consequences of legislative non-progressiveness. There was a time when the small value of real estate made it a trifle for an Italian prince to present a favorite prelate with a few square leagues of neglected woodlands; but now, when those woods have been turned into vineyards and building-lots, and over-population makes the monopoly of land a grievous burden, hundreds of industrious peasants are obliged to starve to swell the revenues of a bloated priest, who nevertheless succeeds in silencing all protests by an appeal to the "necessity of respecting time-honored institutions." At a time when agriculture and pastoral pursuits were the chief industries of Scotland, it was no great grievance to sequester the seventh day for the exclusive service of ecclesiastic purposes; but now, when thousands of poor factory children need outdoor recreations as they need sunlight and bread, it has become an infamous outrage on personal rights to enforce a medieval by-law for the suppression of outdoor sports on the day when those who need it most can find their only chance for recreation. Nevertheless, the dread of innovations defeats the urged re-

peal of a law which for the last hundred years has obliged millions of city dwellers to sacrifice the sunshine of their lives for the benefit of a few clerical vampires. The repeal of the witchcraft laws was preceded by a transition period of at least two hundred years, when the mere dread of an open rupture with the specters of the past cowed intelligent jurists into accepting the charge of an impossible crime, and consigning the victims of superstition to the doom of a hideous death. Their private rationalism might revolt against the absurdity of the proceedings, but there were the witnesses, there were the legal precedents, there were the explicit provisions of the penal code, and with or without the consent of their intellectual conscience they had to pronounce the sentence of death. The penal statutes of medieval England made sheep-stealing a capital offense, and the mulish conservatism of British legislators refused to abolish that relic of the Dark Ages till the common sense of the lower classes found means to redress the abuse in a way of their own. Juries agreed to acquit sheep-stealers altogether, rather than vote away their lives for that of a quadruped. It was in vain that the prosecuting attorney established the fact of the offense beyond a shadow of reasonable doubt. It was in vain that the charge of the judge emphatically indorsed the indictment. It was in vain that the defendants themselves completed the evidence of their guilt by a frank confession; they were acquitted amidst the wrathful protests of the court and the plaudits of the audience, till sheep-owners themselves were obliged to petition for the repeal of the

time-dishonored law. The idea that the mere antiquity of a legal custom is an argument in its favor is a twin sister of the superstitious veneration of antiquated dogmas.

E.—REFORM.

The superstitious dread of innovation, rather than the want of natural intelligence, has for ages thwarted the hopes of rationalism, and the renunciation of that prejudice promises to rival the blessing of Secular education in promoting the advance of social reforms. Orthodox *restiveness*, rather than any conceivable degree of ignorance, has, for instance, prevented the repeal of the Religious Disability laws which still disgrace the statutes of so many civilized nations. A chemical inventor would be suspected of insanity for trying to demonstrate his theories by quoting the Bible in preference to a scientific text-book, yet on questions as open to investigation and proof as any problem of chemistry, the courts of numerous intelligent nations still refuse to accept the testimony of a witness who happens to prefer the philosophy of Humboldt and Spencer to the rant of an oriental spook-monger. The proposition to oblige a water-drinker to defray the expense of his neighbor's passion for intoxicating beverages would justly land the proposer in the next lunatic asylum, yet millions upon millions of our Caucasian fellow-men are still taxed to enable their neighbors to enjoy the luxuries of a creed which the conscience of the unwilling tithe-payer rejects as a degrading superstition. In Europe countless Nonconformists have to contribute to the

support of a parish-priest or village-rector on pain of having a sheriff sell their household goods at public auction. In America farmers and mechanics have to pay double taxes in order to enable an association of mythology-mongers to hold their property tax-free. Because the pantheon of the Ammonites included a god with cannibal propensities, helpless infants were for centuries roasted on the consecrated gridiron of that god; and because eighteen hundred years ago the diseased imagination of a world-renouncing bigot conceived the idea of a deity delighting in the self-affliction of his creatures, the gloom of death still broods over the day devoted to the special worship of that God, and the coercive penalties of the law are weekly visited upon all who refuse to sacrifice their health and happiness on the altar of superstition.

But legislative abuses are not confined to religious anachronisms. The inconsistencies of our penal code still betray the influence of medieval prejudices in the unwise leniency, as well as in the disproportionate severity, of their dealings with purely secular offenses. The vice of intemperance was for centuries encouraged by the example of the clergy, while the control, or even the suppression, of the sexual instinct was enforced by barbarous penalties. And while the panders of the alcohol vice are still countenanced by the sanction of legal license and admitted to official positions of honor and influence, the mediators of sexual vice are treated as social outcasts, and punished with a severity out of all proportion to the actual social standards of virtue. The deserted wife, who in a moment of despair has caused the death of

an unborn child, is treated as the vilest of criminals, while the crime of a railway shark or tenement-speculator whose selfishness and greed have caused a fatal disaster, is condoned in consideration of "social respectability," *i.e.*, a mask of orthodox sentiments and unctuous cant. A Christian jury will thank a banker for shooting a poor wretch whom extreme distress may have driven to enter a house for predatory purposes, but if that same banker should be convicted of embezzling the hard-earned savings of trusting widows and orphans, his fellow-hypocrites will circulate an eloquent petition for his release from a few years of light imprisonment.

There is need of other reforms, which recommend themselves by such cogent arguments that their adoption seems only a question of time, such as the protection of forests, the recognition of women's rights, the "habitual criminal" law, physical education, and the abolition of the poison-traffic.

It is undoubtedly true that the progress from barbarism to culture is characterized by the growth of a voluntary respect for the authority of legal institutions, but it is equally true that the highest goals of civilization cannot be reached till the degree of that respect shall be measured by the utility, rather than by the antiquity, of special laws.

CHAPTER XX.

THE PRIESTHOOD OF SECULARISM.

A.—LESSONS OF INSTINCT.

An instinct inherited from the habits of many generations teaches our social fellow-creatures to entrust the welfare of their communities to the protection of an experienced leader. Birds that become gregarious only at a certain time of the year select a guide for that special occasion. Others have a permanent leader, and among the more intelligent quadrupeds that leadership becomes dual. Besides the stout champion who comes to the front in moments of danger, wild cattle, horses, antelopes, deer, and the social quadrumana have a veteran pioneer who guides their migrations and sentinels their encampments.

Among the primitive tribes of our fellow-men, too, the authority of leadership is divided between a warrior and a teacher, a chieftain and a priest. The obstinacy of savages, who refuse to yield to reason, suggested the plan of controlling their passions by the fear of the unseen, but ghost-mongery was not the only, nor even the most essential, function of primitive priesthood. The elders of the Brahmans were the guardians of homeless children and overseers of public charities. The Celtic Druids were the custodians of national treasures. The runewards of the ancient Scandinavians preserved the historical traditions and law records of their nation. The priests of the Phœnicians (like our Indian medicine men) were trained physicians. The Egyptian

hierophants were priests of knowledge, as well as of mythology. They were the historians and biographers of their nation. They codified the national laws. They taught geometry; they taught grammar; they taught and practiced surgery; they devoted a large portion of their time to astronomical observations. Their temple-cities were, in fact, free universities, and the waste of time devoted to the rites of superstition was more than compensated by secular studies, and to some degree also by the political services of learned priests, who seem to have been occasionally employed in diplomatic emergencies.

Motives of political prudence induced the law-givers of the Mediterranean nations to circumscribe the authority of their pontiffs, which at last was, indeed, almost limited to the supervision of religious ceremonies. But in Rome, as well as in Greece and the Grecian colonies of western Asia, the true functions of priesthood were assumed by the popular exponents of philosophy, especially by the Stoics and Pythagoreans. The weekly lectures of Zeno were attended by a miscellaneous throng of truth-seekers; the disciples of Pythagoras almost worshiped their master; Diagoras and Carneades traveled from town to town, preaching to vast audiences of spell-bound admirers; Apollonius of Tyana rose in fame till cities competed for the honor of his visits; the *clientèle* of no Grecian prince was thought complete without a court philosopher; the tyrant Dionysius, in all the pride of his power, invited the moral rigorist Plato and submitted to his daily repeated reproofs. Phi-

losophers were the confessors, the comforters, and the counselors of their patrons, and philosophic tutors were in such request that wealthy Romans did not hesitate to procure them from the traffickers in Grecian captives and indulge them in all privileges but that of liberty. Centuries before a bishop of Rome contrived to avert the wrath of King Alaric, doomed cities had been spared at the intercession of pagan philosophers, and philosophers more than once succeeded in allaying the fury of mutineers who would have ridiculed an appeal to mythological traditions.

B.—REWARDS OF CONFORMITY.

The power of filial love hardly exceeds that of the passionate veneration which kindles about the person of a sincere teacher of truth. The homage paid to an apostle of light is the noblest form of hero-worship. The hosannas of idol-service overflowing upon the idol-priest are marred by the discords of hypocrisy and the reproofing silence of reason; but the approval of wisdom is the highest reward of its ministry. The brightness of that prestige shames the gilded halo of the mythology-monger; the minister of Truth may lack the pomp of consecrated temples, but his disciples will make a hermit's cave a Delphic grotto and will not willingly let the record of his oracles perish. The chants of the Eleusynian festivals, the shout of the Lupercalia, the mumblings of augurs and sibyls, have been forever silenced; but the words of Plato still live; Socrates still speaks to

thousands of truth-seekers; the wisdom of Seneca still brightens the gloom of adversity.

Religions founded on any basis of truth can survive the fall of their temples. Jerusalem was wrecked in the storm of Roman conquest, but the health-laws of the Mosaic code defied the power of the destroyer, and of all the creeds born on the teeming soil of the East, Judaism alone can still be preached without an alloy of cant and compromise.

The enthusiasm of progress has nothing to fear from the growth of skepticism. Mankind will always appreciate their enlightened well-wishers. In cities where the creed of the Galilean supernaturalist has become almost as obsolete as the witchcraft delusion, progressive clergymen still draw audiences of intelligent and sincere admirers, and the apostles of social reform are haunted by anxious inquirers, disciples whom the penalties of heresy fail to deter, and who if barred out all day will come by night: "Master, what shall we do to be saved?"

In spite of sham saviors, the search after salvation has never ceased, and after eighteen centuries of clerical caricatures the ideal of true priesthood still survives in the hearts of men.

C.—PERVERSION.

The puerile supernaturalism of the pagan myth-mongers could not fail to injure their prestige, even in an age of superstition; but the *antinaturalism* of the Galilean fanatics not only neglected but completely inverted the proper functions of priesthood. The pretended ministers of Truth became her re-

morseless persecutors; the promised healers depreciated the importance of bodily health, the hoped-for apostles of social reform preached the doctrine of renunciation. We should not judge the Christian clergy by the aberrations engendered by the maddening influence of protracted persecutions. It would be equally unfair to give them the credit of latter-day reforms, reluctantly conceded to the demands of rationalism. But we can with perfect fairness judge them by the standard of the moral and intellectual types evolved during the period of their plenary power, the three hundred years from the tenth to the end of the thirteenth century, when the control of morals and education had been unconditionally surrendered into the hands of their chosen representatives. The comparative scale of human turpitude must not include the creations of fiction. We might find a *ne plus ultra* of infamy in the satires of Rabelais, in the myths of Hindostan, or the burlesques of the modern French dramatists. But if we confine our comparison to the records of authentic history, it would be no exaggeration to say that during the period named the type of a Christian priest represented the absolute extreme of all the groveling ignorance, the meanest selfishness, the rankest sloth, the basest servility, the foulest perfidy, the grossest superstition, the most bestial sensuality, to which the majesty of human nature has ever been degraded. Thousands of monasteries fattened on the toil of starving peasants. Villages were beggared by the rapacity of the tithe-gatherer; cities were terrorized by witch-hunts and *autos-da-fé*. The crimps of the inquisitorial

tribunals hired spies and suborned perjurers by promising them a share of confiscated estates. The evidence of intellectual pursuits was equivalent to a sentence of death. Education was almost limited to the memorizing of chants and prayers. "A cloud of ignorance," says Hallam, "overspread the whole face of the church, hardly broken by a few glimmering lights who owe almost the whole of their distinction to the surrounding darkness. . . . In 992, it was asserted that scarcely a single person was to be found, even in Rome itself, who knew the first elements of letters. Not one priest of a thousand in Spain could address a common letter of salutation to another." Every deathbed became a harvest-field of clerical vampires who did not hesitate to bully the dying into robbing their children for the benefit of a bloated convent. Herds of howling fanatics roamed the country, frenzying the superstitious rustics with their predictions of impending horrors. Parishioners had to submit to the base avarice and the baser lusts of insolent parish priests, who in his turn kissed the dust at the feet of an arrogant prelate. The doctrine of Antinaturalism had solved the problem of inflicting the greatest possible amount of misery on the greatest possible number of victims.

D.—PENALTIES OF NEGLECT.

The intellectual interregnum of the Middle Ages, the era of specters and vampires, received the first promise of dawn about the middle of the fourteenth century, when the lessons of the Crusades and the influence of Moorish civilization began to react on

the nations of Christian Europe. Yet, by methods of their own, the vampires succeeded in prolonging the dreadful night. They set their owls a-shrieking from a thousand pulpits ; they darkened the air with the smoke-clouds of *autos-da-fé*. They treated every torch-bearer as an incendiary.

But though the delay of redemption completed the ruin of some of their victims, the ghouls did not escape the deserved retribution. Their fire alarms failed to avert the brightening dawn. Daylight found its way even through the painted glass of dome-windows, and in the open air the blood-suckers had to take wing on pain of being shaken off and trampled under foot. The slaves of Hayti never rose more fiercely against their French tyrants than the German peasants against their clerical oppressor. From Antwerp to Leipzig thousands of convents were leveled with the ground ; the villages of Holland, Minden, and Brunswick joined in a general priest-hunt, carried on with all the cruelties which the man-hunters of the Frankish crusade had inflicted on the pagan Saxons. In the Mediterranean Peninsulas the Jesuits were expelled as enemies of public peace, and their colleagues could maintain themselves only by an alliance with despotism against the liberal and intellectual elements of their country. To patriots of the Garibaldi type the name of a priest has become a byword implying the very quintessence of infamy. The explosion of the French Revolution struck a still deadlier blow at clerical prestige. The fagot-arguments of the Holy Inquisition were answered by

a "burning, as in hell-fire, of priestly shams and lies," and not one out of twenty French monasteries escaped the fury of the avengers. Our Protestant clergymen see their temple walls cracked by a breach of ever-multiplying schisms, and can prop their prestige only by more and more humiliating concessions, and in every intelligent community have to purchase popularity by rank heresies against the dogmas of their predecessors. Here and there the orthodox tenets of the New Testament have survived the progress of rationalism, but haunt the shade, like specters scenting the morning air, and momentarily expecting the summons that shall banish them to the realms of their native night.

E.—REFORM.

When the harbinger of day dispels the specters of darkness, half-awakened sleepers often mourn the fading visions of dreamland, as they would mourn the memories of a vanished world, till they find that the solid earth still remains, with its mountains and forests, and that the enjoyment of real life has but just begun. With a similar regret the dupes of Jesuitism mourn the collapse of their creed and lament the decline of morality, till they find that religion still remains, with its consolations and hopes, and that the true work of redemption has but just begun.

The reign of superstition begins to yield to a religion of reason and humanity. The first forerunners of that religion appeared at the end of the sixteenth century, when the philosophers of northern Europe

first dared to appeal from dogma to nature, and since that revival of common-sense the prison walls of clerical obscurantism have been shaken by shock after shock, till daylight now enters through a thousand fissures.

But Secularism has a positive as well as a negative mission, and after removing the ruins of exploded idols, the champions of reform will begin the work of reconstruction. Temples dedicated to the religion of progress will rise from the ruins of superstition. Communities of reformants will intrust the work of education to chosen teachers, who will combine the functions of an instructor with those of an exhorter. In the languages of several European nations the word "rector" still bears that twofold significance. The ministers of Secularism will not sacrifice physical health to mental culture. They will be *gymnasiarchs*, like the Grecian pedagogues who superintended the athletic exercises of their pupils and accompanied them on foot journeys and hunting excursions. They will be teachers of hygiene, laboring to secure the foundations of mental energy by the preservation of physical vigor, and to banish diseases by the removal of their causes. They will seek to circumscribe the power of prejudice by the extension of knowledge. They will obviate the perils of poverty by lessons of industry and prudence. Their doctrines will dispense with miracles; they will make experience the test of truth, and justice the test of integrity; they will not suppress, but encourage, free inquiry; their war against error will employ no weapons but those of logic.

The religion of reason will limit its proper sphere to the secular welfare of mankind, but will ask, as well as grant, the fullest freedom of metaphysical speculation. Why should the friends of light darken the sunshine of earth with fanatical wars for the suppression of private theories about the mystery of the unrevealed first cause? Why should they rage about the riddle of the veiled hereafter to please the ordainer of the eternal law that visits such inexorable penalties upon the neglect of the present world? Should the friends of common sense quarrel about guesses at the solution of unknowable secrets? We need not grudge our wonder-loving brother the luxury of meditating on the mysteries of the unseen or the possibilities of resurrection. Shall the soul of the dying patriarch live only in his children? Shall it wing its way to distant stars? Shall it linger on earth:

“ Sigh in the breeze, keep silence in the cave,
And glide with airy foot o’er yonder sea ?”

Why should we wrangle about riddles which we cannot possibly solve? But we might certainly have honesty enough to admit that impossibility. Musing on the enigmas of the “land beyond the veil” may entertain us with the visions of a dreamy hour, but should not engross the time needed for the problems of the only world thus far revealed.

Thus, founded on a basis of health-culture, reason, and justice, the office of priesthood will regain its ancient prestige, and the best and wisest of men will become ministers of Secularism by devoting their lives to the science of happiness on earth.

PROF. FELIX L. OSWALD'S WORKS.

* *

**THE SECRET OF THE EAST ; OR, THE ORIGIN
OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION, AND THE SIGNIFI-
CANCE OF ITS RISE AND DECLINE. Cloth, \$1.**

**THE BIBLE OF NATURE ; OR, THE PRINCIPLES
OF SECULARISM. A CONTRIBUTION TO THE RE-
LIGION OF THE FUTURE. Cloth, \$1.**

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION ; OR, THE HEALTH-LAWS
OF NATURE. Cloth, \$1.**

**HOUSEHOLD REMEDIES ; FOR THE PREVALENT
DISORDERS OF THE HUMAN ORGANISM. Cloth, \$1.**

**THE POISON PROBLEM ; OR, THE CAUSE AND
CURE OF INTEMPERANCE. Pap., 25cts ; clo., 75cts.**

**SUMMERLAND SKETCHES ; OR, RAMBLES IN THE
BACKWOODS OF MEXICO AND CENTRAL AMERICA.
Profusely Illustrated from Designs by H. F.
Farny and H. Faber. 8vo, cloth, \$2.50.**

**ZOOLOGICAL SKETCHES. A CONTRIBUTION TO
THE OUTDOOR STUDY OF NATURAL HISTORY. 8vo,
cloth, \$2.**

For all of the above address

**THE TRUTH SEEKER CO.,
28 Lafayette Place, New York.**

WORKS OF
L. K. WASHBURN.

Sunday and the Sabbath. "A law regulating human conduct on the Sabbath is an impertinence." Price, 10 cents.

The False Teaching of the Christian Church. "The Thirty-nine Articles of the Christian church are thirty-nine poor, broken-down opinions." Price, 10 cents.

The Foolishness of Prayer. "Think of a minister's praying God to kill grasshoppers, or trying to induce the deity to undertake a crusade of one against the Colorado beetle!" Price, 10 cents.

Followers of Jesus. Price, 10 cents.

Religious Problems. Price, 10 cents.

Spiritualism: Is It a Faith or a Fact? Price, 5 cents.

Do You Love Jesus? Price, 5 cents.

America's Debt to Thomas Paine. Price, 5 cents.

Is Liberalism Moral? Price, 5 cents.

A Holy Superstition. Price, 5 cents.

Temperance and the Bible. Price, 5 cents.

Free Religion; or, The Religious Demand of To-day.
Price, 5 cents.

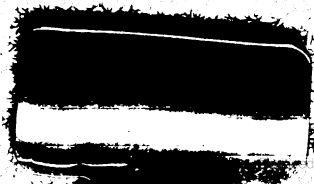
The Brute God of the Old Testament. Price, 5 cents.

The Public Schools and the Catholic Church. 5 cents.

89094581014



B89094581014A



89094581014



b89094581014a